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The Icelandic Canadian

Vol. 10

Winnipeg, Man., 1951

No. 1

Celebrations Among The Icelanders

Even though the Icelandic descendants on this continent are few in number, and widely scattered, we have reason to believe that their common background and specific cultural interests will bind them strongly together for untold years to come.

There are many factors that will prove conducive to this end. There is, of course, the recent achievement of establishing the Chair of Icelandic language and literature at the University of Manitoba, by which will "be established for all time the centre from which all agencies working for the preservation of the Icelandic culture on the North American continent will draw life and inspiration . . ." as Dr. Gillson so ably expressed it in his speech at the Playhouse Theatre, on March 30th, when he announced the establishment of the Chair.

The Icelandic church congregations, with their auxiliaries, Ladies' Aids, and Young People's Societies are a strong factor in keeping the people together in community activities, as are the great number of other organizations, social, welfare, and cultural.

Then there are the various publications here, which deal specifically with Icelandic matters: the Icelandic weeklies, **Lögberg** and **Heimskringla**; the **Sameiningin** and **The Messenger**, small Lutheran publications; **'Ardis**, annual of the Lutheran Women's League; **Brautin**, the annual organ of the Federated Church; the **Tímarit**, published annually by the Icelandic National League, and Thorgeirson's **Almanak**.

All these, which are mainly in the Icelandic language, together with the **Icelandic Canadian**, serve to keep up the contacts among the people of Icelandic descent.

The annual Icelandic celebrations, too, do their share in bringing our people together. These are held in various parts of Canada and the United States, and every so often, a special occasion sparks these annual affairs into grand festivities which have a wider appeal and great significance, even for those who cannot attend in person. Such an occasion was the 17th of June, 1944, when gala festivities were staged in many parts of this continent to celebrate the restoration of the Republic of Iceland. Radio addresses and a radio drama were broadcast by the CBC in honor of this occasion.

In 1946 an elaborate festival was staged at Lundar, Man., to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of the settlement. In 1949 the settlement at Brown, Man., celebrated its 50th anniversary, and the 60th anniversary of the first Icelandic celebration here was observed at Gimli; and last year Winnipeg and New Iceland jointly celebrated at Gimli the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the first Icelandic settlers.

All these festivities have been duly featured in the pages of the Icelandic Canadian, and even if we cannot cover the numerous annual celebrations, with the limited space at our disposal, we feel that they have great significance.

also, in upholding our Icelandic traditions and binding the people more closely together.

These annual observances which are held at Gimli and Hnausa (in Manitoba), Mountain, N.D., Seattle and Blaine (in Washington), with smaller gatherings at various other centres, have of late years received considerable notice from the press and radio.

Jack Scott, in his popular column which appears in **The Vancouver Sun**, gave a good deal of space to the 60th Icelandic Celebration at Gimli, and no less than three privately-owned movie cameras recorded some of the main events on colored film. Last year the CBC made some recordings at the 75th anniversary, which were played on their newscast of the event, the following morning. This year a young Icelandic newspaper woman, Una Kristjanson (who, along with her brothers and sisters, the Kristjansons of Wynyard, has received some well-deserved publicity in **The Icelandic Canadian**), covered the Icelandic celebration at Gimli, for her paper, **The Western Producer of Saskatoon**, and in the August 30th issue gave it a two-page spread in its Magazine section, with interesting pictures and a lively commentary.

This year, also, the CBC made several tape recordings of the proceedings, and broadcast some of them, August 11th, on its program, **Saturday Magazine**. The **Icelandic Canadian** is pleased to give its readers a brief resumé of this program, especially as very few of the people most interested knew about it, and so missed hearing it.

In opening the program the commentator said, "This is the sixty-second Icelandic celebration held in Manitoba, and each year the Icelanders gather from far and near to salute Iceland

and to toast Canada in speeches and song."

He described the painted scenes of Icelandic landscape which form a backdrop for the speakers' and choirs' platforms, and where the **Fjallkona's** throne is placed. This year the Maid of the Mountain was Mrs. Ingibjorg Jonsson, wife of the editor of **Lögberg**, who edits a women's column for that paper, and is an active member of the executive of the Icelandic National League. While the commentator told us about the **Fjallkona's** message we could hear the recorded voice of Mrs. Jonsson in the background giving her greetings to the audience in the Icelandic language.

"There are a number of official guests seated on the speakers' platform," said the commentator, "and a crowd of little blonde children swarming around our CBC truck."

Next we heard the chairman, Rev. V. J. Eylands, introducing the Swedish-Icelandic male voice choir which, under the direction of Arthur Anderson, sang "Heim til Blárra Himinfjalla," and later on they sang "Sof Í Ró," with Elmer Nordal as soloist in both numbers. Elmer's voice was also recorded singing "Fífilbrekka, gróin grund." The transcriptions were very good and did full justice to Mr. Nordal's fine voice and the choir numbers.

In between the musical numbers we heard snatches of speeches by Mr. W. M. Benidickson, Liberal M.P. for Kenora-Rainy River, giving the toast to Canada; Hon. W. C. Miller, minister of education, with greetings from the province; and Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson, who reported on the Icelandic Chair. In a lively manner the commentator skipped around Gimli park, describing the sports, the appetizing looking lunch tables and the picnic atmosphere in general.

The commentator gave a brief sum-

mary of Trausti Isfeld's poem, "Toast to Iceland," while in the background we could hear Mr. Isfeld reading it to the audience. One verse of Gus Sigurdson's "Ode to Canada," was heard, read by Heimir Thorgrimson.

In closing, the narrator briefly touched on the background of the Icelandic

people, their literary traditions and their contribution to Canadian culture, mentioning in particular "the outstanding Icelandic Canadian pianist, Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson," who had been giving a piano recital over CBC networks the previous evening.

H. D.

Sverrir Runolfsson

A young man, Sverrir Runolfson, came from Reykjavik, Iceland, in the fall of 1947 to study singing in California. He had been studying for a little over a year when he ran out of money and owing to the exchange difficulties was unable to obtain further funds from Iceland. But then an unexpected bit of good fortune befell him.

One evening in the spring of 1949 he was asked to sing at a dinner meeting of "The Exchange Club," which is a large business men's association. After his songs and several encores, he was called aside by a distinguished looking gentleman who asked him numerous questions about his musical studies, and thus became aware of

Sverrir's circumstances regarding the lack of funds. This interested listener was none other than the Dean of "The Art Division of Long Beach College," and giving the young singer his card, he asked him to call at his office in the College next morning. The Dean, having recognized the great possibilities of Sverrir's voice, had decided that his career should not be cut short in the very beginning by lack of finances, and upon arrival at the office, Sverrir was introduced to the music professors, shown all around the college, and finally offered two years' free tuition at the school. Sverrir took full advantage of this offer and is becoming well known as a tenor soloist of note. (See **News Letter from California** in this issue of the magazine.)

Card of Sympathy

The members of the staff of the Icelandic Canadian
extend their deepest sympathy to
the business manager, Grace (Reykdal) Thorsteinson
and to the Reykdal family
on the passing away of her father
Paul Reykdal, on Thursday, September 13.

Peace River Pioneer

by MAGNUS G. GUDLAUGSON

(Magnus Gudlaugson came to Gimli in 1883, at the age of three, with his parents, Guðlaugur and Magðalena (Skúladóttir) Bjarnason, from Ljáskógaseli, Dalasýsla, Iceland. Four years later he was an orphan, and grew up in the Arnes district, just north of Gimli, until he went to North Dakota at the age of fifteen, to work on farms. Later he worked in lumber camps, at fishing and hauling fish on Lake Winnipeg, and manual labor such as digging sewers and basements, in Winnipeg. He took time off from these labors to take a three-months' course at a business school in Winnipeg.

In the fall of 1906 he was married to Ólína, daughter of Jón Ólafsson and his wife Geirdis Ólafsdóttir, who had come from Iceland in 1902, and settled at Selkirk. Magnus took his bride to his homestead in Saskatchewan, which was south of Humbolt and thirty miles from a railroad—situated one mile from where Guernsey is now. After three years of hardships (with "one crop frozen, one dried out, and the third one only fair"), he decided to pioneer once more—in the Peace River district. In this story he tells in his own words of his experiences and gives us some interesting details about pioneer life in general in the Peace River settlement. Mr. Gudlaugson took an active part in the development of the community, and was the first president of the local U.F.A. (United Farmers of Alberta). On the farm at Clairmont where he raised his first small cabin, stands a large magnificent farm home, which is now occupied by one of his sons. Two other sons and one daughter are still in the Peace River district, one daughter in Toronto, and one at Alberni, B.C. Mr. and Mrs. Gudlaugson retired in 1948 and moved to White Rock, B.C., with the youngest son.—Editor.)

I had read a great deal about the Peace River Country, and that the Government was building a railroad from Edmonton out to Grande Prairie, which would be continued on to the coast. Promises were also made that the trail from Edson to Grande Prairie would be improved and be fit for a medium-sized wagon-load by the summer of 1911. So I sold my homestead in Saskatchewan, left my wife with friends in Winnipeg and started for Grande Prairie in the spring of 1911.



Magnus G. Gudlaugson

I came to Edmonton, where I looked for Jim Cornwall, affectionately nicknamed "Peace River Jim," the now grand old man of the North. He believed strongly in the north country and was willing to give guidance to all and sundry who came along the trail.

Having reached Edson, I started the trip to Grande Prairie with a Mr. Taft, who had the mail contract over the Edson trail. For the first fifty miles Mr. Taft had four horses hitched to a wagon, but that was as far as a wagon could be taken. From there on it was all pack horses. Each of us paid forty dollars for the privilege of accompanying the party, and were supposed to ride on horseback, but most of the time we had to walk! Twice the packs had to be taken off some of the horses, carried across the muskeg, and the horses themselves had to be helped out where they had sunk. Scattered along the trail we could see the belongings of settlers who had given up and turned back. We got through in eight days.

I spent a week in Grande Prairie looking around, and finally decided on a half section to file my S.A. scrip on. I knew it would be impossible to move my family in over the Edson trail in summer, so I decided to go out the long way, getting a ride as far as Grouard with Peter Tomkins, the Dominion Land Agent there. This journey was north of Peace River by way of Dunvegan and Peace River to Grouard, and from there to Athabaska by water, and then on to Edmonton, a distance of five hundred miles.

The Agent and I caught up with a young couple who were moving out of the country. They had a nice yoke of oxen and a covered wagon. When they got to Grouard, where they took the boat, I bought their outfit—oxen, wagon and a few tools. I got an Indian half-breed to look after it for me until my return.

Grouard is at the north end of Lesser Slave Lake—about 200 miles from Grande Prairie, the way we travelled by team, at that time. The Dominion Land Office was at Grouard, but by the time I had concluded my business, I found that the steamboat had left the day before. These boats operated up and down the Lake about a hundred miles, then along Lesser Slave River, which for navigation, is one of the narrowest and most crooked rivers in the world—and Athabaska River to Athabaska Landing, about 200 miles of waterways in all. There was a portage of about fourteen miles on the Slave River, where all freight as well as passengers had to be transferred from one boat to another, the hauling being done by team.

Well, there I was, stranded at Grouard! Rather than wait for the next boat out, I bought a little flat-bottom boat for \$5.00 and started out all alone on my 200-mile water journey in a

strange, wild country. I was told to follow the north shore of the lake until I came to the narrows, then row across and follow the south side. I left Grouard at noon and on the calm unruffled surface of the lake, I made good headway, rowing all afternoon and into the night. Then I pulled ashore and slept on the beach.

Next day at noon I had reached the narrows and during the six-mile crossing, I was caught in a rain- and hail-storm, with strong gusts of wind whipping the boat off course. Fortunately, I was used to handling a boat or I might have come to grief. After the crossing I found there were several miles of slough, grass and water before I could reach the timber line and shore. As it was getting dark and I was soaking wet, I looked for a place to camp. Finally noticing a small island in the grass, I managed to work my boat up to it. There I found dry wood and soon had a roaring fire going, to dry my clothes and to boil my kettle. Next morning the weather was beautiful, with bright sunshine reflected in the calm expanse of the lake.

That evening, after rowing all day, I reached Sawrage, the end of the lake and the beginning of Slave River. I had come about 100 miles and now had about 100 miles of river boating before I would reach Athabaska. However, it was all down stream. I started down the Slave River that night, thinking I could let the boat float and get some sleep in it while it floated. That was impossible as the river was too crooked and the boat would run into the bank every once in a while and stay there; so I kept going all night without getting any sleep. Next day at noon I hit the rapids. I shot over them in my flat-bottom boat without any difficulty and by evening I was into the Athabaska. Now I let the boat

go and went to sleep. I slept for two or three hours and when I woke up the boat had stranded on an island, so I did not go to sleep again. Now my greatest worry of that journey began. I began to wonder whether I could have passed Athabaska Landing while I slept. I knew I should be pretty close and when it did not show up, I began to worry. If I was past, I might go downstream a long way before I could find a trapper or anyone who could tell me where I was. Then I would have some job coming upstream against the current. At daybreak I spotted a cabin on the bank and I hoped and hoped that there would be someone there to tell me where I was. I climbed the bank and rapped on the door. A man answered and told me I had a few miles to go yet to reach the town of Athabaska Landing. I was thankful. Soon after I landed, I sold the boat for \$5.00—the same as I had paid for it.

I now had come 400 miles from Grande Prairie—200 on water and 200 on land, and I now had one hundred more on land to reach Edmonton. I started walking towards Edmonton and had gone only a few miles when a team and democrat caught up with me. Two young fellows were in the seat and they asked me where I was going. I told them to Edmonton.

"Hop in," they said, "we go within twelve miles this side of Edmonton."

They were fine young men and were out looking for homesteads but did not find anything to suit them. We reached their home at noon the second day and their parents were just as nice as you could wish to meet. I must stay for dinner, and not only that, but be sure to call in on my way back with my family. What a difference there is in people—some can't do too much for you; others go out of their way to put obstacles in your way and make things

miserable for you. Luckily the latter are in the minority by a long way.

I now went to Winnipeg to get my wife and three children—the youngest only a year old. We came to Edmonton where I bought a medium-sized team of horses, a wagon, tent, sugar, flour, tea, coffee and dried fruit—enough to do us until the following winter when I would make a trip to Edson over the Edson trail for supplies. I put canvas over the wagon (prairie schooner style), loaded the supplies in and the bedding and family and started on the 500-mile trip to Grande Prairie. While we were in Edmonton it rained a lot and the road the first day was heavy. We called on our friends—Mr. and Mrs. Knolt and the boys—whom I mentioned before, as they were right by the road. Although it was about 11:00 a.m., we must just wait for dinner, feed and rest our horses, rest ourselves, and have dinner with them. So again I partook of their hospitality, with my wife and three children and a team of horses.

Next day at noon we happened to meet Colonel Jim Cornwall and we all had lunch together at a roadhouse. Now it so happened Colonel Cornwall was one of the chief owners of the steamboats that plied up and down the Athabaska and Little Slave River and Lesser Slave Lake. Mr. Cornwall, being always such a booster for the North, showed a good deal of friendly interest in the pioneers who were moving in to settle the North and he was good enough to write a note to the Captain of the boat that we were going on from Athabaska to give us the best cabin he could and otherwise be helpful to us where possible. This Captain Barber did. Now it had rained again and when we reached the then steep hill going down to Athabaska Landing, it was so steep, muddy and slippery that my wife was afraid to stay in the wagon

and got out with the children, took their socks and shoes off and walked bare-footed down the hill carrying the youngest one in her arms most of the way. The winding hill must have been about a mile or more long. At Athabaska I bought some nails and two windows and a few other most important things. Freight and passengers' fares on the boat were fairly costly and I did not like to pay freight on the horses all the way, so at the portage on Slave River I sold the team to the fellow that did the freighting between the boats. This was a good team and I regretted later that I had sold them. The trip on the boat was rather pleasant, but when we got to Grouard I found to my dismay that it had rained a lot since I was there about three weeks before and that the approach to the bush trail to Peace River, which was a sort of meadow and which was bone dry when I was there before and over which we drove at that time with the team and democrat, was now flooded and they were using boats to go over it. We camped there for five days and part of that time it was raining.

I now bought a pair of Indian ponies and a light wagon. I covered it with canvas, prairie schooner style like the other one. The wagon I got with the oxen was already covered that way when I got it. I loaded all of the heavy stuff into the wagon the oxen hauled and the light things such as bedding and camping outfit into the pony wagon and the family rode in it, with me driving. To drive the oxen I picked up a man who wanted to go to Grande Prairie to homestead. When we started I had to hire a Breed with a boat to take the family across the flooded hay-meadow and we men took the teams around on an old trail in the bush and we all met at the beginning of the trail to Peace River Crossing on the

other side of the hay-meadow. We now had about three hundred miles behind us from Edmonton—two hundred of which was on water and the other one hundred on land from Edmonton to Athabaska Landing. We had about two hundred miles left—about eighty miles from where we now were at Grouard to Peace River Crossing and then 70 miles west on the north side of the river to Dunvegan and then across to the south of the river again 50 miles to Grande Prairie where lay my half-section that I had filed on. The 80-mile stretch to Peace River was nearly all bush road and with all the rains we had there were plenty of mud holes. I got stuck in the first one we came to. The ponies certainly were not as good as the team I sold to the freighter on the portage. If it got heavy going they just bucked and would not try to pull, especially one of them. I tried for a while to get them to pull, but it was no use. The oxen were ahead and by the time I gave up trying to get the ponies to pull their load out, they were quite a way ahead and I had to run to catch up with them. The driver of the oxen was nothing special on the trail and he had never looked back to see if I got through the mud hole and by now had turned a bend in the road and did not see us at all but still kept on. I finally caught up with him and we brought the oxen

back to pull us out. After this experience, knowing what my ponies could do or were willing to do, I drove them ahead, with the team of oxen bringing up the rear.

The next day at noon we were camped near a little creek for dinner. The bush was thick around and I turned the oxen and ponies out to feed as usual. They all had bells on and the ponies were hobbled. I was hardly

(Continued on Page 43)

Thordarson Reunion In North Dakota

By HOLMFRIDUR DANIELSON

I

Among my pleasant experiences, while in North Dakota this last summer, were several visits to 'The Camp', as we playfully called the Thordarson Homestead north-west of Gardar, which was being enthusiastically renovated for the reunion of the whole Thoradson family, which took place during the last days of June and the first week in July.

Incidentally, these visits and my interesting chats with the members of the family, gave me the opportunity to glean some remarkable samples of N. Dakota history, which later were augmented by delving into old manuscripts, including several letters written by the pioneers to relatives in Iceland, during those early years.

From this gracefully substantial, fifty-six-year-old farm home had emerged a group of energetic, intelligent, even brilliant young people to go out into the American scene as doctors, professors, writers, and generally outstanding citizens. Marching ahead of them, in somewhat solitary splendor, had been their uncle, Dr. C. H. Thordarson, famous Chicago scientist and inventor, his brother, Dr. Thordur Thordarson a brilliant physician at Minneota, and for some years editor of "Vinland"; and their cousin, the noted lawyer and humanitarian, Judge Gudmundur Grimson, now Justice of the Supreme Court of N. Dakota, at Bismarck. And beyond it all one could sense the beneficial influence of the pioneers, those sturdy and intrepid men and women who left their lowly turf-thatched cottages in Iceland, to brave the hardships and

uncertainties in a strange, new land, and who left their children such a rich legacy of integrity, resourcefulness, and love of learning.

• • •

On the fifteenth of June, the first to arrive at the 'Camp' was Solveig, the oldest Thordarson daughter, with her husband, Judge Arni Gislason, from New Ulm, Minn. Mrs. Gislason was born in a log cabin on this farm, and brought up in the district. She



The Thordarson home, built in 1895

graduated from Normal School at Valley City, N D., in 1909, and received her B.A. degree from the U. of N. D. in 1914.

Watching her slow smile and quiet, rather absent-minded manner one does not at first sense the versatility and restless energy, that has helped to shape the colorful career of Solveig Gislason. But in conversation her eyes sparkle and her vividness seems to flow into the room, albeit with a certain reservation. Her sisters, whom I came to know slightly are also charming conversationalists and seem to have this same delightful quality of somewhat repressed vitality.

To widen her outlook and environment, Solveig journeyed to Montana, taking a claim on a ranch in Armstead where she lived in her solitary cabin and taught school in the district, riding back and forth on her saddle horse. But further education beckoned her, so back at the University of Minnesota, she took a course in medicine, graduating as M.D. in 1921. However, instead of going into practice, she was married in 1922 to Arni Gislason, who is a son of Bjorn and Aðalbjorg Gislason, early Minnesota pioneers. Two years later, he was appointed to the judgeship at New Ulm, a position which he held for 27 years, having been retired last year. But the position still remains in the family, his place being taken by a nephew, Sidney Gislason. Robert, the only son of Judge and Mrs. Gislason, is a law student at the University of Minnesota, in Minneapolis. Judge Gislason's children of his first marriage are: Arlon Gislason, head of Sales and Contract Department for Swifts of Chicago; Raymond, manager of the Chicago Transformer Co., in Zanesville, Ohio; and Grace (Mrs. F. E. Anderson) of Milwaukee.

Mrs. Gislason has written children's stories for American school books. Her story, **Blue Ribbons**, is included in "Stories from the West," one of three books in the regional series, "Children of the U.S.A.", and is about two Minnesota farm children, their 4-H Club projects, and how they won their Blue Ribbons. These books have received wide publicity, having been displayed last summer at UNESCO International Educational Seminars in Brussels, Quebec and Montreal, and were exhibited for two months last spring at the American Book Fair in Osaka City, in occupied Japan, and at the Book Exhibition of the 9th All-India Conference in Indore. Mrs. Gislason's story has

also been embossed in braille, a letter from the American Printing House for the Blind, Louisville, Kentucky, stating that the series, "Children of the U.S.A." is now ready in braille, and is proving very popular with schools and classes for the blind. In another school book, **Distant Doorways**, (a 4th grade reader, published in 1940), which deals with life and customs in many lands, the section, "With Vikings Bold," is compiled by Solveig Gislason and contains: Views of Viking Life; Ragnar Becomes King; Eric the Red Discovers Greenland; Leif the Lucky Discovers America; In Scandinavian Countries; Animals Useful to Man; and a number of short verses, together with a summary and study helps.

Mrs. Gislason is at present doing some research for another children's story to be included in an American school book. But her interests are varied, and since Judge Gislason's retirement, they have established a small antique shop in New Ulm, and she takes much pleasure in collecting beautiful and quaint articles for her shop, of which she gave me a charming example.

The prospect that faced the Gislasons on arrival at the Thordarson homestead seemed rather formidable. The house had been for years, either vacant or loaned to a succession of farm workers, residing with their families for longer or shorter periods in the district. And indeed, the dear old place looked somewhat forlorn and decrepit. The plaster was broken and trailing into little mounds of dust, in a dozen spots. "By dint of scraping and digging we did discover that all the rooms had their floors intact," declared the three Thordarson girls gaily, for by now Olavia and Runa (Gudrun) had arrived from Bottineau and Fargo, respectively. They were not afraid of

hard work, for in their girlhood they had worked hard on this very farm, to help their widowed mother after their father died in 1911.

Almost every day one or more of the cars from "the Camp" could be seen driving up to the stores at Mountain or Gardar for supplies. Said the genial Mountain merchant, Chris Gudmundson: "I declare, those Thordarson girls have bought enough cleaning agents, lye and what not, to dissolve their hands up to the elbows."

Some workmen came to tear down and rebuild the battered plaster and do some of the painting jobs, but much of the work was accomplished by the happy Thordarsons themselves, with the girls scouring and scrubbing, while Judge Gislason, his finely chiselled features powdered with plaster dust, hung the window screens, painted walls and arranged furniture.

Ah, the problem of furnishing the majestic old nine-room house was a sizeable one, for between twenty and thirty members of the family were expected for the reunion, and many would stay for several days. The Thordarson sisters had been diligently collecting interesting pieces of furniture by attending auction sales and by garnering the odd article from the various Thordarson households. Some of the neighbors thoughtfully offered extra beds and sofas, and after about ten days, the home, with new roofing and completely painted outside and in, had assumed a delightfully cheerful and lived-in atmosphere.

The *piece de resistance*, among the furnishings, was a dining-room suite, picked up at an auction sale and shipped from Minneapolis. The huge old oval mahogany table, when extended, could accommodate 12 to 14 persons, and there were 12 dining chairs with colorful slip-covered backs

and leather seats. To complete the group was a large walnut buffet, with console mirror hung above it. In the living room were two comfortable rockers, several small tables and stands, and a sofa which could be used as a bed, with a gaily-colored bedthrow. Drapes had been hung at the living-room window, and on the covered radiator was a nice assortment of magazines and books. Solveig was perched upon a stool at the spacious dining-room bay-window, putting up gay homespun drapes, with thumb-tacks!

A small sheet-metal heater had been installed in the dining room, "For otherwise we would have perished, these cold June nights," laughed the Thordarsons. An enlarged picture of Mother (Mrs. Thordarson) and of the home, together with a few prints, adorned the walls.

For the kitchen, a long counter had been secured, and cupboards and equipment, although not of the first rank according to present-day standards, stood ready to do their duty. The oil lamps, the little heater, and wood-burning stove suggested homely comfort. "But we have an ingenious type of refrigerator," said Olavia, and they showed me in the back yard, a round metal pipe, some 16 inches across, reaching perhaps 18 feet into the ground. Into this cool culvert-like recess all the perishable food was lowered in a bucket!

"We'll show you the process," they said, and forthwith up came the bucket, loaded with good things to eat—so off we went into the house to have a cup of coffee and some delicious wild berries, served with rich country cream.

Around the first of July the real fiesta began, with rows of cars lined up against the back fence as four generations of Thordarsons came "home" from all directions.

From Fargo came their only brother, Professor T. W. (Ted) Thordarson, where he is State Director of the Department of Correspondence at the Agricultural College. With him was his wife Katrin, daughter of Olafur K. and Sigurbjorg (Thomassom) Olafsson. Proving the intense vitality of the Thordarsons, and perhaps to illustrate that studying through correspondence need not be a hardship, the professor, in his spare time, took a complete three-year course in law from La Salle University and recently passed the bar examinations with flying colors.

Mr. and Mrs. John Freeman (Gudrun) also came from Fargo. Olavia and her husband William Freeman arrived from Bottineau, where Mr. Freeman is County Agricultural Agent. Their children are: William Morris, who graduated from Minot Teachers' College in 1941, and is Superintendent of Schools at Burlington, N.D.; Doris Mae (Mrs. H. R. Stevenson), a graduate in Home Economics, U. of N. D. in 1947; Theodore George, a graduate of N.D.A.C. (School of Agriculture) in 1949, who is employed with the Soil Conservation Department in Ward County; and Kathryn Ruth, a sophomore at the School of Liberal Arts (N.D.A.C.).

Four of the sisters came long distances to be at the reunion. They are: Mrs. Thyri Bainter, a widow, who runs a restaurant in the small town of Zillah, Washington; Mrs. Dorothy Rafson, who came with her husband from Cleveland, Ohio; Miss May Thordarson, who manages a luncheon club for Carnegie Steel in Gary, Indiana; and Mrs. Julia Blackburn, a widow, who lives at Glenview, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. With Julia arrived the queen of this happy gathering, Mrs. Ingibjorg Thordarson, to be eagerly welcomed to the old home by her seven daughters

and one son, and to be surrounded by the love of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The young people swarmed gaily all over the place, took sun-baths in the front yard, inspected the huge old barn, so sturdily constructed in 1886, and made plans for coming back another year, while the Thordarson sisters handled deftly the "orderly confusion" of this enormous household, no doubt having cleverly contrived to keep the assorted husbands and brother Ted from being continually underfoot.

No doubt there were, in the long quiet evenings, long sessions of reminiscences as the Thordarsons recalled childhood memories, and stories of how their father, Grimur Thordarson, had built up and made a success of this productive North Dakota farm. Letters were read, too — old, old letters written during the early days—which gave details of pioneer hardships, and a long interesting letter from Judge Grimson, who unfortunately could not be present at the reunion. And so we pieced together the colorful story of Grimur Thordarson and his dauntless widowed mother who had made the long trek from Wisconsin to North Dakota.

II.

Grimur Thordarson, born at Stað, in Hrútafjörður in 1856, was the oldest son of Þordur Árnason from Bjarnastöðum in Hvítársíða, Iceland, and his wife Guðrun Grimsdóttir, who was a sister of Steimgrímur Grimson, Judge Grimson's father. In 1873, Guðrun and Þórdur came from Iceland to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with their six children, and two months later Guðrun was a widow. But her own fortitude and the staunch dependability of her son, Grimur, who now took charge as head of the family, were attributes

(Continued on Page 39)

The Chair In Icelandic

It is appropriate that news should be published from time to time concerning the Chair in Icelandic in the University of Manitoba. With that in view the Foundation Committee has asked the Publicity Committee to report as the campaign advances for raising the Foundation Fund. The members of the Publicity Committee, it may be recalled, are Einar P. Jonsson and Stefan Einarsson, the editors of the two Icelandic weeklies, *Lögberg* and *Heimskringla*; Mrs. H. F. Danielson, chairman of the editorial board of this magazine; Mrs. E. P. Jonsson, editor of the women's section in *Lögberg*; Dr. L. A. Sigurdson and Judge W. J. Lindal.

By way of recapitulation, it should be stated that even though the collection campaign is coming to a close and contributions in any amount are quite welcome, as indeed they have been from the beginning, the original plan is still adhered to, namely that to qualify as a Founder of the Chair, a donor must contribute the sum of \$1,000.00 or more. It need hardly be reiterated that the Founder plan is not limited to individual donations of \$1,000.00 or more, and that any group may combine their contributions and in that way qualify as Group or Recognition Founders.

Now that the last stage in the collection campaign has been reached, the main emphasis is being placed on the contribution which the various Icelandic districts could make to this cause by establishing local units, who could reach the stipulated amount and qualify as Group Founders. Cities and towns in which a considerable number of Icelanders reside, are included in this category. Each unit will decide under

what name it chooses to be recorded as a Founder.

It happened somewhat fortuitously that my wife and I were able to visit the West Coast last month. We stopped off in Edmonton on the way out and in Calgary on the way back. At the Coast we made brief visits to Seattle, Blaine and Victoria and stayed for a few days in Vancouver. We were received everywhere with open arms. That may have been partly because people were glad to meet us or renew old acquaintances, but it was also because our trip to the Coast was regarded as a valuable and perhaps necessary service in the best interests of the Icelandic people and the heritage which is theirs.

It is most encouraging to note the wholehearted support that has been given to this project by people of Icelandic descent who reside many hundreds and even thousands of miles away from the University of Manitoba. Out at the Coast, so it seemed to us, there was a blending, at once beautiful and noble, of duties towards the old mother country, the country of adoption and the institutions and organizations in the immediate vicinity. It was agreed, almost without exception, by those with whom we conferred, that the Icelandic people out there should make a contribution to this worthy cause. Immediate action, it was felt, should be taken and it should be in the form of Founder units in the four main cities, Seattle, Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary. Lack of time made it impossible to establish committees before we left, but both men and women volunteered to assist in forming local organizations for the furthering of this project. Judging by

the opinions expressed, there appears to be no doubt that the stipulated one thousand dollar amounts will be subscribed in each of those four cities.

A short time previously reports appeared in the Icelandic weeklies in regard to what was being done in Gimli and in the Reykjavik district, which is on the west side of Lake Manitoba. The fact that reports were made public from only two points does not mean that nothing was being done elsewhere. Far from it. Optimistic reports have been received from other districts such as Lundar, Selkirk, Riverton, Big Island and from Sigrunes, which is on the east side of Lake Manitoba. The Publicity Committee has agreed not to publish detailed statements from the various districts until so authorized by the districts themselves.

The most recent trip by members of the committee was made on the first of this month when Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Jonsson and the writer visited Hnausa, which is on the west side of Lake Winnipeg. It was most encouraging and inspiring to talk to people down there. Our mission was very well received and it may be taken for granted that this small community will reach the objective. The same may be said of two other relatively small districts, Big Island and Reykjavik. In passing, it is only fair to state that some of the larger districts are well advanced on the second thousand.

In the reaction of the Icelandic people to this campaign a new high may have been reached in public relations. It is not often that a person is thanked for visiting people and giving them an opportunity to part with some of their money, but that has often happened in this campaign for the Foundation Fund.

Plans are under way for taking steps this fall to form Founder units in

Arborg, Glenboro, Baldur, Langruth and Morden, Manitoba, and in the Icelandic districts in Saskatchewan and south of the international boundary. In most of these communities, individuals have already become Founders, which augurs well for the success of the later collective efforts.

The committees, and indeed all who visualize the far-reaching potentialities of this project, rejoice in the knowledge that people of Icelandic extraction, no matter whether they live near or far distant from the University of Manitoba, are most friendly to the cause and desire to see the Department of Icelandic established and become a success. This very general support and approval will at once mark the Department as an educational institution belonging to all the Icelandic people of America and will make it the permanent centre of Iceland culture on this side of the Atlantic. Judging by what has already been achieved, there does not appear to be any doubt that most if not all the Icelandic communities will participate in this noble undertaking.

Many reasons could be given for this obvious and very general goodwill and the excellent support given the Chair. First, there is the language which is steadily disappearing as the everyday medium of expression in the homes and must be preserved. Then there is the Icelandic literature, classic as well as modern, which has such an inherent cultural value that it should be available to students in all universities. But there is something else. The conviction is gaining ground among the Icelandic people and among leading educationists of this country, that the establishment of this Department will prove to be the first step leading to an eventual objective when the Icelandic language will be given its merited place

in the field of higher education as a classic language and one of the basic languages of modern English.

These very aims and purposes which the Icelandic people see in the establishment of this Chair have been visualized in their true perspective by Dr. A. H. S. Gillson, the President of the University. He has already made known that it is his thought, and he speaks for the University, that if a proper start is to be made and steps taken leading to eventual implementation of these aims and purposes, the man appointed to the Chair should devote most of the first year to various types of preliminary work and planning, which may be classified as follows:

1. Organize the Icelandic library, catalogue books and in other ways make it accessible to students.
2. Familiarize himself with the University system in Manitoba and particularly the Department of English.
3. Travel through the Icelandic communities and meet the people, especially young people of Icelandic descent.
4. Travel to other universities and become acquainted with their presid-

ents and the heads of Departments of English and Germanics.

This, it is true, is equally a programme of activities for the future as well as the immediate present, but preliminary steps of this kind are most essential if the Department is to succeed. The suggested travelling shows that the President is fully aware of the need of reaching out to young people in the Icelandic districts and of establishing contacts with graduates from other universities who have specialized in English or other Northern European languages and may want to come to Manitoba to study under an authority in Old Icelandic.

When I was at the Pacific Coast I sensed that this wider field of activities, which the President has in mind, appealed to our people. They felt that in this way distances would be overcome and the Chair in Icelandic brought closer to them. This strengthened their desire to participate in a movement of vital interest to "Vestur-Islandinger," everywhere.

W. J. LINDAL,
Chairman of the Publicity
Committee.

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Sigurdson Recital Shows Poetic Skill

Snjolaug Sigurdson, one of Winnipeg's most eminent pianists, whose career within recent years has centred in study and recitals in New York City, presented a piano recital Monday, Sept. 10, in First Lutheran Church. Miss Sigurdson has been home on vacation this summer and will soon return to New York.

The concert was sponsored by the Icelandic Canadian Club with proceeds being given to the club's Scholarship fund. Miss Sigurdson contributed her services.

In a brief address, Mrs. H. F. Danielson stated that the club was not large in a numerical sense and that many non-members of Canadian Icelandic descent had generously supported the Scholarship fund since it was established five years ago. In four years \$1,600.00 had been raised to aid young artists. Snjolaug Sigurdson was the first young Icelandic artist to receive the Icelandic Canadian Scholarship.

"This is the second time the club has had the privilege of presenting Miss Sigurdson in recital for the enjoyment of the people of Winnipeg," Mrs. Danielson said, "and she has again graciously given of her time and talents for the specific purpose of aiding the career of other worthy and aspiring musicians. We are most grateful to her for donating her services upon this occasion."

Miss Sigurdson's recital was acclaimed by press and public as a highlight in musical attainment in this city, and glowing tributes were paid to her by the Free Press and Tribune reviewers, and by E. P. Jonsson in the weekly publication, *Lögberg*.

Following are excerpts from the re-

view by S. Roy Maley, of the Winnipeg Tribune:

"Above and below all of Miss Sigurdson's pianism, she disclosed a sound musicianship and a poetic feeling which, added to the technical ability to set forth the general form of a composition while still bringing out clear-



Snjolaug Sigurdson

ly all of its contrasting parts and distinct voices, resulted in piano playing of a high artistic value. Her tone could be big, as in the Prokofieff Third Sonata and it could be delicate and even feathery in some sections of the lovely Mozart variations on the air, Unser Dummer Pobel Meint.

"Miss Sigurdson's initial number was Bach's Prelude and Fugue in D major, arranged by d'Albert. The fugue especially had grandeur of conception, and was fascinating in its imaginative play of hues and convincing interpretive details.

"Miss Sigurdson's playing of Brahms

is always a highlight of her recitals. The Ballade in G Minor, Op 118, No. 3 is a battle-horse of aspiring school-girls and is most assuredly of the masculine gender. Rhythm is its mainstay, quick and sure handling of the plucking chords its difficulty. Miss Sigurdson gave a fine performance of the Ballade, and the Intermezzo in E major, Op. 116, No. 6 was most expressive.

"The legato chords were notably well pedalled, with all passing notes having a clear voice. The middle section in G sharp minor was delightful in its simplicity and grace, with melody singing over the gently flowing triplets in enchanting manner.

"One of the high spots of the eve-

ning was the performance of Chopin's F minor Fantasy, often regarded by some critics as the greatest of all Chopin's works. If anything characterized Miss Sigurdson's Chopin, it must surely be her lyrical, poetic mood, finding delight in a flowing rhythm. And combined with that—because that can never be fully satisfying—a positive vigor that displays itself in engaging dynamic expression.

"Miss Sigurdson's achievement of Ravel's Valses Nobles et Sentimentales was in some respects one of her happiest, in that her light touch gave it the requisite feeling of iridescence. The Epilogue, with its decadent melancholy, was particularly expressive."

Wins Scholarship



A brilliant student and consistent scholarship winner is **Dr. Joyce Lorraine (Findlay) Grace**. She graduated in medicine this spring with honors from the University of Manitoba.

She is the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Findlay, of 176 Oakdale Place, St. James, and was married in June this year to Michael K. Grace, who is interning at St. Boniface Hospital. At present she is on the staff at

the Psychopathic ward at the General Hospital.

On graduating from high school in St. James in 1944, Dr. Grace was awarded the Isbister scholarship, the Minnie J. B. Campbell (I.O.D.E.) gold medal for literature and the Manitoba Jubilee Prize for highest marks in Canadian history. During her first year at University she again won the Isbister scholarship and in 1946 the Sir James Aikins scholarship in English.

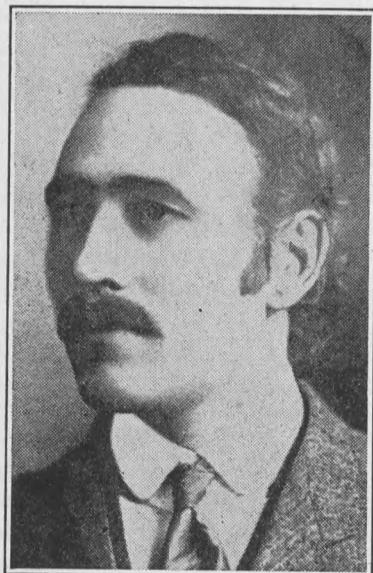
Having been also an outstanding music student, Dr. Grace won in 1937 the Jubilee scholarship for highest standing in her grade, and in 1943 the Silver medal and the Frederick Harris scholarship awarded for the highest standing in any grade in the province of Manitoba. She has studied ballet dancing and is efficient at dressmaking and cooking.

Her mother, Mrs. Findlay, is the youngest daughter of the Icelandic pioneers of Glenboro, the late Arni and Gudrun Helga Sveinson. Mr. Findlay is of Scottish descent.

Book Review

Ljóð, Sig. Júl. Jóhannesson, R.vík.
1950, p.p. 147.

Few Icelandic writers in this country have attained the popularity of Dr. Sigurdur Jul. Johannesson, and his many admirers will welcome this small volume of selected poems. The publisher, appropriately enough, is the Icelandic periodical *Æskan* (Youth). This was the first children's magazine published in Iceland and its founder



Dr. S. J. Johannesson

and first editor was Dr. S.J.J. The publication of this book is therefore a well-deserved tribute to a pioneer in this field of literature.

Dr. Johannesson's early poems first appeared in book form in his *Sögur og kvæði* (Winnipeg, 1901-3). This was followed by *Kvistir* (Reykjavik, 1910) and *Sólskin* (Reykjavik, 1930). A great many others have appeared at various times in newspapers and periodicals both here and in Iceland.

Making a small collection, where there is much to choose from, is at all times a difficult task. The compiler of the present volume has, one feels, not been altogether successful in his labors. If the poems that appear in this book were intended to mirror those qualities that have endeared their author to two generations of children and young people, few will find fault with the selections made, but if they were, as one would have a right to expect, chosen as being representative of all that was most significant and enduring in Dr. Johannesson's poetry, few will deny that this collection leaves much to be desired.

Much of S.J.J.'s best poetry is the poetry of protest and some of his finest translations are of that nature, e.g. his translations of Hood's *Song of the Shirt*. His attacks on pomp and privilege and injustice in all its forms are marked by an intensity rarely equalled in Icelandic poetry. None of these poems appear in this selection. Without them a true appraisal of S.J.J.'s great poetic gifts is impossible.

Of great interest is the excellent biographical sketch written by the compiler, the late Steingrímur Arason. Here he succeeds admirably well in bringing out the highlights in the remarkable career of Dr. Johannesson. Of special interest is the account of the poet's early struggles to acquire an education. The first major goal was reached in 1897 when he graduated from the College of Reykjavik. A year later he entered medical school and completed the first year of medicine. This training was interrupted when he sailed for America in the summer of 1899. Then followed three years of hard work and hard times in Canada

and the United States. In 1903 he finally resumed his medical studies in Chicago and graduated in 1907.

This scholastic record is remarkable for the reason that this student was over 20 years of age before he had a chance to attend any preparatory school. From the time he entered the "Latin school" until his graduation from college he had to earn his living by working both winter and summer. In spite of this, he completed the last

two college years in the space of one year, a feat that up to that time had only been duplicated by three men, one of whom was the great poet Einar Benediktsson.

Great intellectual powers and fortitude and perseverance of a high order enabled Dr. Johannesson to overcome all difficulties in those early years. These qualities have not failed him to this day.

H. Th.

FAREWELL RECEPTION FOR THORA ASGEIRSON

Members of the Icelandic community in Winnipeg gathered Tuesday evening, September 11, in First Federated Church to say "farewell and good luck" to Thora Asgeirson, who left September 13, to continue her piano studies in Paris, France.

As a token of goodwill and appreciation from her many friends, a cheque for \$1,700.00, the Icelandic

the Winnipeg chapter of the Icelandic National League.

A gift fund was presented to the guest of honor by Rev. P. M. Peturson, in behalf of the First Federated Church and the Icelandic National League, and by representatives of these organizations: the Jon Sigurdson Chapter, I.O.D.E., Daniel McIntyre Alumni Choir and the Swedish-Icelandic Male Voice Choir.

Receiving the guests with the guest of honor were her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Asgeirson; Rev. P. M. Petursson, pastor of the First Federated Church and Mrs. Petursson; Wilhelm Kristjanson, president of the Icelandic Canadian Club and Mrs. Kristjanson; and Miss Gudbjorg Sigurdson, co-convener of the reception committee with Mrs. S. Jakobson.

Those presiding included Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, of New York, and Miss Eva Claire, Thora's former music teachers; Mrs. J. F. Kristjanson, Mrs. L. A. Sigurdson, Mrs. E. P. Jonsson, Mrs. V. J. Eylands, Mrs. H. F. Danielson and Mrs. Flora Benson.

Readers of the Icelandic Canadian, who have followed Thora's brilliant career as a music student, will join her many friends in wishing her good luck and much success in her chosen career.



Canadian Scholarship, was presented to the honor guest by Paul Bardal, M.L.A., treasurer of the Scholarship fund. In presenting the cheque, Mr. Bardal said it was an outstanding example of community spirit and the high esteem in which Thora was held. Among organizations participating in the scholarship award were: The Icelandic Celebration Committee, the First Lutheran Church and "Frón,"

News Letter From California

Dear Mrs. Danielson:

I am happy to comply with your request to send you some news of our Icelandic activities in and around Los Angeles. But first let me repeat how much I enjoy your excellent magazine. I would not be without it. I really want to get the idea across that I think **The Icelandic Canadian** is among the very best magazines I know. And this opinion is widely shared by your many subscribers here.

The Icelanders here did themselves proud on March 31, '50, when a benefit was staged for the Blaine Old People's Home. On that occasion, Thora Matthiasson Rebard sang, as did Joe Bjorndal (who has sung in Hollywood Bowl with Grace Moore). Bill and Sylvia Einarson supplied the music for

the dance. We cleared \$1,349.26 for the Blaine Home, "Stafholt". (Sylvia is a daughter of Professor and Mrs. S. K. Hall, of Wynyard, Sask.).



JOHN SHIELD, portraying Thorfinnur Karlsefni, who formed the first white colony in North America, in 1003.

We have some lovely singers here and many of them are very accomplished in their line. Thora Matthiasson

(NOTE: Mrs. Gudny Thorwaldson is a daughter of Friðrik Johannesson from Garði, in Fnjóskadal, Iceland, and his wife Ingibjorg Guðmundsdóttir from Brimnesi in Fáskrúdfirdi. Her husband, Bjorn Thorwaldson, is a son of Stíður Thorwaldson, and his wife Thorunn (Björnsdóttir) Petursson. Mrs. Pauline Shield (Skjöld) is a sister to Mr. Thorwaldson. These families hail from Mountain, North Dakota. Mrs. Thorwaldson and Mrs. Shield are both very active and capable workers in Icelandic community life in Los Angeles, Mrs. Thorwaldson being now the president of the Icelandic Society. But they have the charming gift of keeping their own achievements in the background, while enthusiastically giving others credit for work well done. It is through them that the **Icelandic Canadian** has had a lead on so many interesting features and news from California.

Through various sources this news has been augmented and readers will find additional items in the news section about some of the persons mentioned in these letters. In this issue: Sverrir Runolfson, Johannes Newton and Larry Thor. In the near future we hope to carry a feature on Eileen Christy, who is now in Hollywood movies. Mrs. Thora Matthiasson Rebard is a granddaughter of the Icelandic poet, Matthias Jochumsson. Her father is Gunnar Matthiasson, and her mother is Gudny, the oldest sister of Mrs. Sigrun Findlay.—See News Section.—Editor.)

has sung in choruses with Al Jolson. She has been heard many times on various radio stations. Mae Valdis (Mrs. Cook) has a position in an office at present so is not doing so much singing, but she has put on recitals in Icelandic costume, and her cousin Sumi Swanson has appeared with her, giving talks on Iceland. She sang over KGER at Long Beach in a chorus made up of all solo voices. She sang in a double quartet teamed with Nadine Connor and in California Melodies broadcast from coast to coast. She has been a church soloist and trained a group of girls—Job's Daughters—in a state-wide contest, where they won first place and a silver cup.

We have a young man with us who is one of the Icelandic students studying voice here, and who has sung for us on several occasions. His name is Sverrir Runolfson. His wife Janice, who is an accomplished pianist, accompanies him and has given us many delightful piano solos.

Eileen Christy sang at the Leif Erikson program (October 7, 1950). Her voice is superb and she looked like a Dresden doll on the stage. Her cousin, Leona Oddstad, is also a fine singer.

The Leif Erikson Day observance has been held for many years here, but this is the first time the Icelandic group has been active participants. Johannes Newton, who has shown great efficiency in our activities, and Sumi Swanson worked on the standing committees, Mr. Newton being vice-president. Mr. Swanson gave the main address on Leif Erikson and his discovery of America. I am sending you the program for the evening which was very impressive and showed a great deal of careful thought and planning; also the International Day program.

Olive Swanson and Nina Saemundson were on the committee and active

in the preparations. John Shield, son of Egill and Pauline Shield, depicted Einar Jónsson's statue of Þorfinnur-Karlsefni. John is 6 feet 6 inches tall, and has a very fine figure. His face and hands as well as his garments were all bronzed. He really cut an imposing figure. Representing Iceland, in Icelandic costume, was Snoka Thordarson. She was one of 18 "princesses," who were all dressed in Scandinavian costumes. About two thousand persons, mostly of Scandinavian descent, attended the celebration which was held at the Los Angeles Breakfast Club.

Johannes Newton also made arrangements for our group to take part, for the first time, in the International Day celebration of the International Institute of Los Angeles, October 14-15, 1950. The Institute is a community-wide service agency and cultural center which welcomes newcomers from foreign lands, and assists them in making adjustments to their new environment. Each fall this large festival is staged by the Institute for raising money for their needs, and all national groups are invited to take part with handicraft exhibits, food and entertainment. As this was our first attempt we had a small exhibit which we shared with students from India! Our food contribution was vinarterta, which we cut into serving pieces and sold for ten cents a cut. The various ethnic groups were given tables for their food booths around a large room. Fourteen groups participated in this International buffet service. Most of these groups also had handicraft display booths with a variety of very beautiful and valuable articles. Mrs. Dilla Talcott and Mrs. Inga Freeburg modelled the Icelandic costumes. Mrs. Freeburg is a "war bride" from Iceland, but Dilla is a cousin of Sigridur (Nikulásdóttir), Mrs. Grimur Sigurdson of Gimli, Man. We hope to have a larger

display next fall as we have heard that Iceland has a travelling exhibit which we may be able to borrow.

The program at the festival consisted mainly of folk dances and songs, our contribution (both days) being Icelandic songs by Sverrir Runolfson.

At our Icelandic "meeting" January 7th, the program consisted of a movie from Hong Kong and Japan taken by Hal Linker, lecturer. He is married to an Icelandic girl. Sverrir sang, as did Olavia Erlendson from Long Beach, who is a nurse and so has little time to devote to singing, but she has a lovely voice. Larry Thor was with us that evening and brought his mother, who had been visiting here. He was introduced by our president Jon Thorbergson.

The Los Angeles Icelandic American Club had their annual picnic August 12th in Elysian Park, with a very good attendance. The election of officers took place, and our president Jon Thorbergson wishing to relinquish his office owing to impaired health, the mantle fell on me (having been vice-president previously). Mr. Niel Thor is vice-president and Mr. Gudmundur Gudlaugson was re-elected treasurer. Mrs. Violet Berndsen, our very effi-

cient secretary, was re-elected. She is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fridrik Halldorson of Mountain, N.D.

My first and very pleasant duty as president was to preside at a reception in honor of Mr. Thor Thors, Iceland's Minister to Washington, and Mrs. Thors, August 28, at the Town House, one of the best hotels here. Our vice-consul, Stanley Olafson, welcomed Mr. Thors, who then gave a very interesting short talk in English and Icelandic. Our fine singers, Eileen Christy, Sverrir Runolfson and Thora Matthiasson sang, and Gunnar Matthiasson spoke briefly. The audience sang "O, Guð Vors Lands," "Hvað er svo glatt," and "The Star Spangled Banner." In the reception line we tried to give as many people as possible a chance to speak personally to Mr. and Mrs. Thors, for they are such a charming couple, as is also their younger son who was with them.

I will let you know from time to time about interesting activities among our Icelandic group here.

With best wishes for the continued success of your fine magazine, I am,

Yours sincerely,

Gudny Thorwaldson.

Chemical Institute of Canada Honors Dr. Thorvaldson

Dr. Thorbergur Thorvaldson, of Saskatoon, dean emeritus of the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Saskatchewan, has been awarded the Chemical Institute of Canada medal for outstanding contribution to chemistry in Canada. This medal (awarded for the first time this year) is made of palladium and commemorates the 200th anniversary of the isolation of nickel. The award was made possible by the Internationa

Nickle Co. of Canada. A few weeks earlier Dr. Thorvaldson was presented with the Henry Marshall Tory medal by the Royal Society of Canada in recognition for valuable contribution to Chemistry.

Dr. Thorvaldson, since his retirement in 1949 as head of the Dept. of Chemistry at the University of Saskatoon, has been actively engaged in chemical research. (See Icel. Can. Summer 1949).

WAR SERVICE RECORD



L.Cpl. Henry Einarsson

L.Cpl. HENRY EINARSSON

Enlisted in the R.C.A. of the Canadian Army March 1943. Later loaned to the British Army for one year. Was in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. He was with the Commandoes on the continent and was dropped with his unit behind enemy lines. They were among the first to reach Germany. Awarded the French and Germany Star, 1939-45 Star and C.V.S.M.

Son of Helgi and Sara (Stagg) Einarsson,
St. Martin, Man.



2nd. Lt. R. T. Steinolfson



L.A.C. Walter Paulson

L.A.C. WALTER PAULSON

Born at Leslie, Sask., December 11, 1918. Enlisted in R.C.A.F. July 1943. Served in Canada and England. Discharged September 1945.

Son of Paul and Jonina (Borgford) Paulson,
Foam Lake, Sask.



Sigurdur Sigurdsson

A well-educated French Canadian, who had not been in the Canadian West but obviously knew Canadian history well and had read a good deal about the various ethnic groups in Western Canada, asked this question of the writer who, he said, was about the fifth or sixth Icelander he had ever



SIGURDUR SIGURDSSON

met: How is it that the Icelanders, who are so few, seem to have reached out into so many fields and with such success; they are farmers, fishermen, tradesmen, teachers, doctors, lawyers, judges, members of parliament and ministers of the Crown? The question was intriguing and on closer examination, it seems that there is considerable evidence to substantiate this unexpected tribute to the Icelandic people.

If what was said is true, it is no accident. It is based upon something deep in the Icelandic mind, something which more than anything else has made possible the existence of the Icelanders as

a people. The migration of the Vikings of old to Iceland was much more than an escape from tyranny. It was the natural way in which to satisfy a spirit of unrest, an urge to penetrate the unknown, sail uncharted seas and explore far distant lands. In the modern world that same spirit finds expression in individualism, itself at times unharnessed. It was therefore inevitable that the Icelandic immigrant groups would refuse to stay put. The result has been that within a comparatively short time Icelanders were to be found in almost every field of human effort in the life and the economy of this their new homeland.

This reaching out, away from his fellow countrymen, is well exemplified by the subject of this sketch. Another good example, and they are many, is his close personal friend, Jon Olafsson Stál, who has a nation-wide reputation for his skill in pouring steel—a unique departure from what one would expect from the people of a remote island such as Iceland.

Sigurdur Sigurdsson was born at Svelgsá, Snæfellsnessýslu, in the year 1874, and migrated to Canada when he was 30 years old. During the first 15 years, Sigurdur's activities were more or less exploratory and not fixed to any particular trade or business. In 1919 he decided to enter into the retail furniture business. He had the enormous sum of \$400.00 with which to open business, but coupled with it was the really enormous confidence which Sigurdur had in himself, in the soundness of the principles of business in which he believed, but above all, in the inheritance of mind and character which he knew would stand him in good stead in years of trial and tribulation.

That confidence was well placed. The handicap of foreign birth was more than balanced by his integrity and zeal. The keen competition in the retail trade was met and during the world depression of the early thirties, his establishment stood intact midst bankruptcies all around him. In recent years, the expansion has been

tail furniture stores in Canada. The store premises consists of a brick building, really of three storeys as the basement is full of furniture, coupled with the basement of an adjoining building recently built by Mr. Sigurdsson. The two basements combine to form a display floor which stands comparison with similar displays in the large de-



Main floor from front entrance of the Alberta Furniture Co. Ltd. store.

rapid and for some time the annual turnover has been around the three hundred thousand dollar mark.

Siggi Sigurdsson operates under the name of Alberta Furniture Co. Ltd. It is a family corporation and neither outside capital nor brain was imported to build up the business. As far as the writer knows, Siggi is the only Icelander who has gone into the retail furniture business exclusively and the present store is one of the largest re-

partment stores of this country. A short distance away is a warehouse.

Siggi Sigurdsson has inherited the Icelandic bent to literature. He reads a lot and has a large library of both English and Icelandic books. Some of the latter are rare and Siggi will undoubtedly see to it that they are preserved for students of Icelandic literature. His favorite poet is Matthias Jochumsson. Sigurdur desires to keep abreast with events among Vestur-

Islendingar and is a subscriber to both Icelandic weeklies and the Icelandic Canadian.

The qualities of mind that enabled Siggi Sigurdsson to succeed in business, when it was an uphill grind, have enabled him to retain the common touch when success seems to await his every turn. His inherited Icelandic "ges-trisni" has, if anything, expanded during the years when fortune has been kind to him.

That hospitality is lavished upon

the Icelandic visitor equally by him and his wife Ragnheidur, a daughter of Joseph Schram from Saudarkroki in Skagafirdi in Iceland, whom many Icelanders will recall. Mrs. Sigurdsson is endowed with the qualities of the artist, which have found expression in painting and drawing, and in a collection of rare pottery and other articles of artistic beauty.

The Sigurdssons give substance to the remarks of that Canadian in Montreal.

W. J. L.

Joan Bergman Skates In West



Joan Bergman, Winnipeg Winter Club skater and senior ladies pairs champion of western Canada, recently passed the seventh figure skating test at Vancouver's summer school. She also passed her silver dance tests under the tutelage of Albert Edmonds, Winter Club professional, who spent the summer at the same school. Joan is now preparing for her gold test, the final and highest award in figure skating.

Joan started figure skating in 1947 and passed her first test in the spring of 1948. She has for three summers been trained by Miss Tasie McCarthy

at Copper Cliff, Ont. and passed her sixth test under the tutelage of Miss Sheila Smith, in Winnipeg. In Club competition she has won the Novice Junior and Intermediate trophies. In the Western Canadian championships held at Saskatoon in 1951, she placed second in the Junior Ladies, and with Miss Frances Abbott won the Western Pair trophy, for the second time. She has skated in Winter Club carnivals, and at various skating carnivals in Manitoba country towns.

Joan graduated from grade XII, at St. John's Technical High school last spring. She was very active in school athletics, in track and field events, and is a member of the volley ball team. In grade 9, she won the Machray Junior High School "M" award, and the "J" award at St. John's. As a member of the Junior Council she has modelled for the T. Eaton Co. spring fashion show.

Joan is 18 years old, and is a daughter of John and Oddny Bergman of Winnipeg, formerly of Arborg, Man. She and her parents are members of the First Lutheran church, and of the Icelandic Canadian club.

Wins Trip To Honolulu

Sixteen-year-old **Enid Delgatty**, of Flin Flon, was this summer awarded an all-expense-free trip to Honolulu as one of two Manitoba winners of the Canadian Pacific Air Lines' Cross-Canada high school essay contest.

For the C.P.A.-sponsored contest, contestants had to write an essay on "The Future of Trade in the South Pacific," or "The History of Transportation in the South Pacific." Enid



chose the former topic, and won the Manitoba contest with Leonard Moroz of Winnipeg, as two contestants—a boy and a girl—were picked from each of the four western provinces.

Enid is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Pat Delgatty of Flin Flon. Her father, born in Saskatchewan, is of Scottish descent, and after teaching for several years, came to Flin Flon in 1933. Mrs. Delgatty was born at Piney, Man., her parents being Bjorn and Kristín (Jónsdóttir) Thorvaldson. Bjorn (Gottskálkson) Thorvaldson came from Mikluey, in Skagafjarðarsýsla, Iceland, to North Dakota in 1886, and from there to Piney in 1889.

On being interviewed by the Icelandic Canadian, after her trip, Enid was bubbling over with excitement and enthusiasm. "Our trip to Hawaii provided even more enjoyment and education than we had anticipated," she said. "At Vancouver, Leonard and I boarded the C.P.A. airliner **Empress of Auckland**, accompanied by our mothers, whose expenses were also paid on the trip. While in Hawaii we were guests for ten days at the Moana Hotel in Honolulu on the island of Oahu, and from there centered all our activities. Visits to the Bishop Museum, the Aquarium, the Zoo, a Mormon and a Buddhist Temple and a tour of Oahu were among the highlights of our stay.

"The vivid emerald of the lush vegetation and the brown of the volcanic soil makes the colouring of the island astonishingly sharp and clear from the air."

As may be expected, after her winning the essay contest, Enid is quite well informed about the Hawaiian Islands and expresses herself well, when describing the beauties of these "islands set like gems in the middle of the blue, blue Pacific." She can tell you about the "continual summer climate," or the "breathtaking profusion of flowers, the hibiscus blossoms and the shower tree whose leaves drop off when the flowers appear, giving the magic impression that the whole tree has been dipped in a huge pot of pink or gold, depending on the variety of the tree."

Enid speaks of the people too, "The peoples of the world have been so thoroughly intermingled in Hawaii," she quotes, "that it has been called 'The Melting Pot of the World', and there is no room for race or colour prejudice."

"Friendliness is the password in Hawaii," beams Enid. "The philosophy of the people is: 'If it rain, why worry? The sun—she soon come out and dry us off!', and in Hawaii the sun always does come out again!"

"We had a wonderful holiday and are very grateful to those who made the trip possible. We have said Aloha to Hawaii—but it does not mean only

Goodbye—for me it means, 'I'll see you again sometime'!"

Since coming home to Flin Flon, Enid has written a series of articles for the local paper telling "about all the little happenings and sights we enjoyed so much, but which would take a book to tell of, properly."

Possibly Enid will be writing some interesting features for the Icelandic Canadian in the near future! —H.D.

Larry Moves On And Up

When the Icelandic Canadian ran an article on **Larry Thor**, in the Winter copy of 1949, we suggested that he was not so much one who had arrived as a young man on his way. Well, Larry has been moving right along, and we are now pleased to insert a brief progress report on this dynamic young Icelander.

Having started his radio work at Flin Flon (at \$70 a month), and from there progressed to Timmins, Ont., to Toronto, and Montreal, and finally to Hollywood, he soon found himself doing 40 hours weekly as night supervisor of the Columbia Broadcasting System—a highly technical job. For good measure he announced for 19 outside-sponsored programs aired by the CBS hook-up.

All this netted our hero a very comfortable living, to say the least, and many a man would have been content to tarry a while. But the six-foot-one, 210 pound dynamo who is Larry Thor found staff chores too limiting, and a few months ago he turned free lance. Now he sells that full and vibrant voice of his to such as want their wares or services known to the listening millions of radio fans. Recently he has been picked by the Col-

umbria net-work to star in a weekly dramatic half-hour entitled "Broadway is My Beat", where he plays the role of Detective Danny Clover.

For all these high-priced activities, Larry's income is close up to the \$1000-a-week bracket, which enables him and Mrs. Thor, the former Leona Finnie of Winnipeg, to live grandly with their three sons in their new home in the Hollywood Hills. A far cry that from their early struggles, or from those of Larry's father, the late "Mundi" Thorsteinson, when he was rearing his family as school principal at Lundar, Man., on a Depression salary.

So far Larry has kept away from television, but he rather expects to be "swallowed up in it next year." We'll be looking at you then, Larry, when TV comes to Winnipeg! H. J. S.

FIRST ISBISTER SCHOLARSHIP

(Cash payment of \$50.00 and remission of fees \$105.00), was won by:

Jon Frederick Page Sigurdson, son of Dr. and Mrs. L. A. Sigurdson of Winnipeg.

Large Icelandic Choir Presents Concerts at Gardar and Mountain

The combined children's choirs of Mountain, Gardar and Hallson, under the direction of Mrs. H. F. Danielson, presented a choral concert at the Gardar hall on Wednesday, July 11, and at the Mountain hall on Thursday, July 12, sponsored by the Icelandic organization, "Baran."

Mrs. Danielson has been in the community for the past six weeks training the choir, giving instructions in dramatics and conducting Icelandic language classes.

The choir of seventy voices sang three groups comprising ten Icelandic songs which the members had learned during the six-weeks' course. Three short plays were presented, one of them being an elaborate costume play (*Cinderella*). There was an Icelandic folk dance in which 24 of the smallest children took part, performing with delightful precision and spontaneous gaiety.

At both concerts the overflow audience, which had arrived from all over the community, some from as far as Edinburg, Cavalier and Langdon, was much impressed with the sparkling quality of the performance. The children's artistic interpretation of the music and their sensitive response to the conductor's every gesture won the admiration of the audience at once. At the close of the programme, the choir, in response to thunderous and continued applause, gave several encores.

The plays were done with technical skill and artistic handling of voice and movement on stage, worthy of much more seasoned performers. The tempo was brisk and never a cue missed or any fumbling of lines or action.

An added attraction at the Moun-

tain concert were vocal solos by Rev. E. H. Sigmar and Mrs. Sigmar, who were visiting in the community, on their way to Rev. Sigmar's new position as pastor at the Icelandic Lutheran church in Seattle. They were accompanied by Mrs. Harald S. Sigmar.

Brief addresses were given by the local pastor, Rev. E. H. Fafnis, by Mrs. John Hillman and by M. F. Bjornson, the mayor of Mountain. Rev. H. Sigmar, D.D., former pastor in the district, greeted the audience and expressed his pleasure at being present on this occasion. All the speakers stressed their delight and amazement at the outstanding performance of the children.

Reverend Fafnis explained why the "Baran" considered it worthwhile to sponsor these classes. "Not only is it valuable for the children," he said, "to become conversant with the Icelandic language, which is a living classical tongue, containing a great wealth of literary treasures, but we also feel that by participating in these summer courses the young people have the opportunity of getting competent training in choral singing and dramatic work. These concerts show amply," he said, "what rich rewards may be reaped through highly efficient leadership, combined with the fine cooperation of the class teachers, and the enthusiasm of the children."

H. B. Grimson, secretary of the organization, presented all the children with suitably inscribed cards to commemorate the occasion. The teachers, Mrs. S. F. Steinolfson, Mrs. Leo Hillman, Mrs. J. Sigurdson, Mrs. P. Hannesson, Mrs. M. S. Gudmundson, Mrs. H. B. Grimson, Mrs. H. Bjornson and Mrs. K. D. Dinusson, together with the accompanists, Mrs. J. Goodman, Mar-

vel Kristjanson and Mrs. Wm. Olgeirson, were presented with tokens of appreciation.

The president, G. J. Jonasson, presented Mrs. Danielson with a huge basket of flowers and a handsome gift, a present from the choir members. Mrs. Danielson, who was wearing a corsage, a gift of Mrs. Steinolfson (who also did the decorations for the stage

sets) spoke briefly, expressing her thanks.

The choir members and the community as a whole showed such enthusiasm for this educational and cultural effort that the organization has every hope of being able to continue the work next summer.

—From "The Cavalier Chronicle,"
July 19.

IN THE NEWS

RETURN FROM ABROAD

Two young Winnipeg girls, **Bertha Kristjansson**, Medical Technician at the Winnipeg General Hospital, and **Donna Armstrong**, who is also a Medical Technician on the staff of the Misericordia Hospital, have recently returned from a year's sojourn abroad. They visited many places of historical interest in England and Scotland and later, on the return trip home, travelled on the continent, to France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Holland and Sweden. While in England, they had the honor of being invited by Their Majesties, King George and Queen Elizabeth, to a garden party held at Buckingham Palace on July 19th.

Bertha is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fridrik Kristjansson of Winnipeg. After attending the University of Manitoba for two years, Bertha entered the Winnipeg General Hospital, receiving the degree of Medical Technician in 1948. Donna's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Roy Armstrong, Winnipeg. Donna graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1948 with a B.Sc. degree. In 1949 she received the degree of Medical Technician from the Winnipeg General Hospital.

To gain further experience in laboratory technique, both girls spent

several months in medical laboratory work in London's county hospitals; Bertha at the St. Mary Abbot's and Donna at the National Temperance Hospital.



NORTH DAKOTA GRADUATE

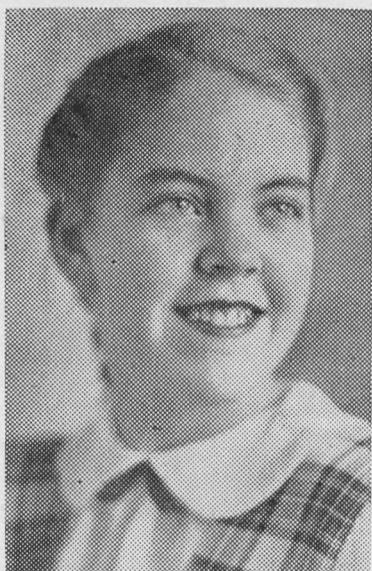
Christine Eleanor Bjornson received her B.Sc. degree in Education this spring from the University of North Dakota, majoring in music (piano and vocal). She has a very fine voice and has done considerable singing in public. She is a daughter of Matt Bjornson of Cavalier, N. D., and his wife Gudny (Dinusson).



AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Mr. Gilbert Arnason, principal at the Mulvey Junior High School of Winnipeg, was awarded \$500.00 to take a special course at the Summer school of Narcotics and Alcohol studies at the Yale University.

Mr. Arnason is born in Winnipeg and received his B.A. and M.A. degrees at the University of Manitoba, and is at present time preparing for his Ph.D. He is the son of Mrs. Maria Arnason of Winnipeg, and the late Sveinbjorn Arnason.

WINS MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP

Dorothy Mae Jonasson won a Scholarship of \$250.00 for further study of the violin at the Royal Conservatory of Music at Toronto. Mr. Elie Spivak heard Dorothy Mae play when he was here at the Music Teachers Convention this summer, and he was so taken with her playing that he offered her this scholarship for further study at the Conservatory.

Three years ago Dorothy Mae won the I.O.D.E. scholarship, then only 13 years of age, (see Icel. Can. Fall issue 1948). She left for Toronto to take up her studies late in August. Dorothy is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. O. Jonasson, 370 Arlington St. Winnipeg.

★

**MRS. ISFELD PRESIDES
AT CONVENTION**

Mrs. E. A. Isfeld, who was re-elected last spring as president of the Manitoba Music Teachers' Ass'n, had the honor of presiding at the annual convention of the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' which was held in Winnipeg this summer, for four days.

**ICELANDER HAS BRILLIANT
CAREER IN THE U.S.A.**

Johannes Newton was born at Silfrastaðir in Skagafjörður, Iceland. His mother was Guðrún Johannsdóttir, from Lýtingsstöðum, in Skagafjörður, and his father, who died before he was born, was Gordon Newton from Australia.

In 1941 Johannes Newton came to America on a scholarship awarded to him by the American Scandinavian Foundation, and took up studies at Johns Hopkins University. After receiving another scholarship he graduated as Bachelor in Mechanical Engineering in 1943.

He was given permission by the U.S. War Department to do research work for one year, following which he volunteered for the armed forces and thus received his American Citizenship in 1944. After serving with the Engineering Corps he was released to do research work at the North American Aviation Company.

His purpose in majoring in engineering had originally been to put that knowledge to work in studying the enormous potentialities of producing electricity from the streams in Iceland and also to utilize still further the steam from the hot springs. But in America he soon found himself involved in many phases of interesting work. While he was perfecting a method of extracting minerals from the hot water in Iceland he conceived the idea of producing fresh water from sea water, by using this process in reverse. He is at present working on this project and having considerable success.

Mr. Newton is a partner in a consultant engineering company, The Summund Associates, in Pasadena. He is a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and has been chairman of a committee on Hydraulic

and Pneumatic systems. He has developed control systems for various applications and uses. He is also chairman of Aviation and Gas Turbine divisions of the Southern California section and is a member of the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences, The American Rocket Society, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, and at present is the President of the Leif Erickson Festival committee. He also belongs to the American Legion and is a sustaining Associate of the Scandinavian American Foundation.

A very able leader in all activities of the Icelandic group, he has been president of the Icelandic American Club of Los Angeles, and served on various committees to promote its cultural activities. Mr. Newton was married in 1945 to Marie Claire Edgerton of Fremont, Ohio. They have one daughter, Kristin Louise, three years old.

Mr. Newton also enjoys several hobbies and sports, horseback riding and sailing being his favorite recreation. Recently he received his Air Pilot's license.



Mrs. W. H. G. Michaels from Tulsa, Oklahoma, visited in Winnipeg this summer with her sister Louise (Mrs. Alec Johnson) and other relatives. Mrs. Michaels (Clara) is a daughter of the late Thorsteinn and Hlaðgerður (Laxdal) Thorlakson, whose families were well known pioneers in the Mountain, N. D., district. Hlaðgerður was a daughter of the esteemed pioneer midwife, Aldis Laxdal, and Thorsteinn was a brother of Rev. N. S. and Rev. Paul Thorlakson.

Mrs. Michaels is a widow and her two older sons are well established in interesting positions, while the youngest son, Morton Laxdal Michaels, is in third year Engineering at the University of Oklahoma.

The oldest son, Granville, graduated in Business Administration from the Oklahoma School of Accountancy, served three years in the U.S. Army Finance Detachment. Prior to entering service, he was office manager for James L. Anderson, Independent Oil Producer and drilling contractor at Gainesville, Texas, having had previous experience with Delaka Oil Co., in charge of accountancy.

Richard, the second son, is a graduate in Petroleum Engineering from the University of Tulsa, and the two brothers are associated in business in Tulsa. The firm is known as Michaels Brothers Construction Co. They are both married.

Mrs. Clara Michaels has four sisters and one brother residing in Detroit. They are Dan Thorlakson, Bessie (Mrs. Bartholomew), Mrs. Olive Brand, Mrs. Mae Jones and Mrs. Lillian Mooney. The youngest sister is Mrs. Beatrice Thorsteinson of Leslie, Sask.



EMILY SIGURDSON SINGS ON RADIO

Miss Emily Sigurdson of Gardar, N. D. who for the last two years has been a student at St. Olaf College, sang on the talent parade from Casselton this spring, and won the radio award which entitled her to sing over WDAY for a whole week. During the summer Emily went to summer school so as to finish her course in teaching and will be teaching this fall. But she hopes to continue her musical studies, especially her vocal lessons for she has a fine voice and loves singing.

Emily who is a daughter of Emil and Sigrun Sigurdson of Gardar, (and a niece of Mrs. H. A. Bergman of Winnipeg), was invited to be Miss America, two years ago, at the 60th Icelandic Celebration at Gimli.

DEGREE AWARDED TO SUPERINTENDENT

The degree of doctor of education has been awarded **Jonas Christian Jonason** of 11319 126 St. Edmonton, by the University of Oregon in Eugene.

Dr. Jonason is a graduate of the University of Alberta having received the degrees of bachelor of arts and master of arts from that university. At present he is liaison superintendent between the U. of A. Faculty of education and the Clover Bar School Division. On July 1st he became the superintendent of Clover Bar School Division

As principal of various schools in central Alberta, inspector of schools at Hanna and Stettler, instructor in the Edmonton Normal School and associate professor in the faculty of education in Edmonton, Dr. Jonason has had wide experience in education.

During the Second World War he served for four years in the R.C.A.F. as intelligence officer in Canada, Alaska and overseas.

Dr. Jonason's parents were Kristjan Jonasson from Straumfjörður, in Mýrum, Iceland and his wife Halldóra Bergþórsdóttir from Laugárfossi. They came to Canada in 1900, and Dr. Jonason was born in this country. He served in Iceland with the Canadian armed forces until the end of the war, as an intelligence officer. While in Iceland he gave to the armed services a number of lectures on the country and its people which served to create a better understanding between the services and the Icelanders.



SERVING IN KOREA

—Ed. Note: The following news item was sent to us by Valgerður Jónsson of Sauðárkrók, Iceland.

Thorgrimur Jonsson is at present

serving with the 24 American Division in Korea. Thorgrimur left Iceland for the United States in 1948, where shortly after his arrival, joining the United States Army, he left with the 24th Division to Japan with the rank of Corporal.

The 24th Division was the first of the American forces to be sent in the service of the U.N. to Fuson and from there to the battlefield where they are still serving.

Previous to going to the United States and enlisting Corporal Jonsson worked for the AOA at the Keflavik airfield.

Thorgrimur was born in Skagafjörður, Iceland on Sept. 2nd 1928, his parents being Johann B. Josephson, and his wife Ingibjörg Guðnadóttir. His family has been residing in Reykjavik since 1942.



OLAF OLAFSON CONVENTION

Olaf Olafson of Old Wives, Sask., was honored at the 39th annual convention of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association of which he was president for many years, with the presentation of a scroll signed by his many friends and acquaintances in the agricultural field.

The meeting, held this year in Moose Jaw, was called the Olaf Olafson Convention in his honor, and in appreciation of his contribution to the stock growers and to the livestock industry in general.

Mr. Olafson came to Canada from Iceland in 1887 and after doing farm work and working on the railroad for a time, took up his farming and ranching interest south-west of Moose Jaw before the turn of the century. He has lived there ever since and has been prominent in community circles.

FLIES TO JAMAICA

Just after the disastrous hurricane that struck Jamaica in August, a native Winnipegger, **Stephan A. Bjarnason** of Toronto, who is executive assistant to the Canadian Red Cross national commission, flew to the hurricane-ravaged island, accompanying an aircraft shipment by Canadian Red Cross of 3,000 pounds of blankets and 6,000 pounds of food for hurricane victims.

Mr. Bjarnason, who served in the second World War, as did his father Jon Helgi Bjarnason (formerly of Lundar, Man., see Icel. Can. June '45), is the nephew and namesake of the late Stefan A. Bjarnason, B.A. B.Sc.,

M.A. who organized the Dominion Experimental farm at Morden, Man., and was the first superintendent there.



GRADUATES WITH HONORS

Margaret Beck Hviston, graduated from the University of North Dakota as Bachelor of Arts with high honors last June (Magna cum Laude), shortly previous to her graduation she was elected to the "Phi Beta Kappa" sorority. To attain this membership a student has to excell in all subjects. Margaret majored in English, also studied the Norse languages and the fine arts. She is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Richard Beck of Grand Forks, N. Dak.

Thordarson Reunion

(Continued from Page 17)

capable of bringing them triumphantly through many a trial, and to create in them a bulwark against adversity for later penniless immigrants.

Guðrun moved with her family to the small Icelandic settlement in Shawano County, Wisconsin, in 1876. But the land was unproductive there and the settlement lasted only about six years, 1874-1880, as most of the settlers looked with longing eyes toward the rich lands of the new Pembina County settlement in North Dakota, and so took the plunge anew to move on to a better location.

With a small group of settlers, Guðrun and Grimur set out for North Dakota in 1880. The women and children went by rail as far as Grafton, and from there to the farm—40 miles—they rode in wagons. The men came across country, with their wagons and some stock, walking a good part of the journey of some 700 to 800 miles. The long trek took about 60 days, and

must have taxed the patience and ingenuity of the hardy group, which included, among others, the eminent poet Stephan G. Stephanson, Grimur's brother Arni, and the youngest brother, Hjortur, then 13 years old, whom Ella Wheeler Wilcox, had given the extra name of **Chester**, when she was his teacher and a neighbor of the family in Wisconsin. As they plodded along they were no doubt entertained with S. G. Stephanson's brilliant and profound poetic epics, while Hjortur (C. H. Thordarson, later owner of the Thordarson Transformer Co. Chicago), dreamed into the future, although he could not see the illustrious career that lay ahead of him. Ahead of him lay the long Dakota winters spent in avid study with the small but precious home library as his background. His sincerity, perseverance, frugality and brilliance of mind were to carry him far. His ability to "do without a lot of useless things with

which the modern world abounds" and to concentrate on assimilating the essentials of knowledge helped to bring him to a high eminence, for at his death in 1945 he held a Master of Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin and an honorary degree of Ph.D. from the University of Iceland. His remarkable library was bought by the University of Wisconsin for \$300,000, and consisted of some 11,000 books on science, many of them being rare editions, and included also a large number of Icelandic volumes. It is reported that the Thordarson library contained the largest collection of books on science in the English language.

Grimur and his mother Guðrun took two homesteads in the Gardar district of North Dakota, built cabins on both of them and so were able to receive and help a number of families that came from Iceland in the next few years. This service they rendered to relatives and others, alike, giving of their generosity and affection to all that came their way.

It seems remarkable that just two years after Guðrun and Grimur Thordarson came to their North Dakota homestead, they were able to receive and find living quarters for a large number of relatives who arrived in 1882. In this group were Steingrímur and Guðrun Grimsson (Judge Grimson's parents) with a large family; Steingrímur's brother, Steinolfur, and their youngest sister, Auður, together with their families. About a year later, another sister, Jóreiður, having been widowed, came to America with all her children and joined the group on the two Thordarson farms at Gardar, until all could find places of their own. The letters written in 1883, to relatives in Iceland, by Steinolfur (Judge Grimson's uncle), describe graphically the

hazardous journey across the eastern states to North Dakota.

"The boat brought us to Boston August 2, 1882 and all of us were herded to the immigration sheds where the customs officials examined our luggage. We, Icelanders, were allowed to stay in the ship overnight and got good food. The next day we boarded a train which proceeded with many stops, to Buffalo. After changing trains in the night we stopped at a wayside station in the morning where we got coffee and bread for which we had to pay ten cents a cup, and came to Buffalo the next evening at 7.30. We were well housed, and were given breakfast and a good mid-day meal.

"On the evening of the 5th of August, the agent took us a long way into the city and we expected to board another train, but were eventually taken on board some sort of a Great Lakes freighter and relegated to the hold into a welter of unsavory freight. Among other things were a quantity of coal and six mules! There was hardly room for any of us to sit down, let alone lie down and rest, there being up to a hundred humans crowded in among this mess, including all of us Icelanders, several Finns, and people from various other lands. I can hardly imagine a more uncomfortable and filthy existence than what we had to endure for almost a week on this miserable 'water barge' which hardly seemed to move forward, there being constant stops to load and unload freight, while the human cargo was pushed this way and that, and much of our luggage broken or damaged. On top of all this we were practically without food for the whole week, getting nothing on the boat except what little we could afford to buy, which was very expensive—a small sandwich being ten cents—so that we feared that

the children would perish from hunger. Fortunately, we had a bit of food and coffee left over from the trip between Iceland and England, which may have proved to be our salvation.

"When we came to Duluth August 11, we were taken a long distance to a building, where our luggage was taken from us and we were requested to pay 25 cents on each article, regardless of its size. In this manner I had to pay 12 krónur, and altogether our family had to pay 10 dollars, and in addition I know we were woefully cheated on the exchange. That night we were harbored in a large empty building and allowed to lie on the bare floor, but received neither food nor drink! The next morning we managed to buy some dry bread, and then boarded a train which brought us to St. Paul at 5 p.m. that night. This was as far as our fare would take us, and still a long journey lay ahead of us—some 300 to 400 miles. Many were without any funds, but all helped each other as best they could, until all had secured tickets to Grafton, North Dakota. Again we lost considerably on the exchange as we did not know the value of the English pound.

"We arrived at Grafton on Sunday, August 13, and all our luggage was taken and locked up in a building, but no one paid any attention to us at all. So there we were penniless and abandoned—the agent not being at home—with no place to go, and a rainstorm coming on. Just then a Norwegian settler came to our aid, and advised us to take shelter in a box-car which stood empty on the railroad. By this time we were used to poor accommodation and gladly availed ourselves of this haven for the night, poor as it was.

"This was as far as we could go by rail, but 40 miles remained to reach our destination. We then ventured to

hire two men to take us the rest of the way. There were 29 of us and we were supplied with two teams of horses and wagons, this costing 30 dollars, which was twice as much as the usual charge. But we were strangers in a strange country, did not understand the language, and so had no alternative but to accept these exorbitant terms. We started off at 12 o'clock noon, camped out during the night and the next day, August 15, reached the home of our sister Guðrun."

One can imagine the relief and gratitude of these weary travellers as they reached their haven of safety and were received with open arms by Grimur Thordarson and his mother Guðrún.

In his interesting letter written to the Thordarsons this summer, Judge Grimson tells how Grimur Thordarson "was the salvation of all our relatives when they first came here, by furnishing them with living quarters and work."

"When we came," says Judge Grimson, "the whole group was absolutely penniless. Your father was living with your grandmother on her homestead, and loaned us the fair-sized log cabin he had built on his own land. When Jóreiður came, I know he helped to furnish a house for her too. . . . With foresight and a keen sense of land values, your father had selected that homestead at the foot of the mountain, which was somewhat flooded and fertilized every spring. And while getting established, he raised hay and cattle, which to start with was less expensive than grain crops. Through his energy and foresight he prospered, and when the railroad came to Milton he built a little hotel there, called the 'Farmer's Home', located across the street from where Halvorson's bank was afterwards built. That took real courage!"

"We lived for about a year in your

father's cabin," continues Judge Grimson, "and in 1883 my father built a little cabin on the ridge half a mile east of your place, and by 1884 we had a fairly big log house. I remember the neighborhood parties at your grandmother's house, and the building of the tremendous barn. The stone mason, I believe, was an Irishman, but the carpenter work was done by Steinolfur and an assistant."

Grimur Thordarson had by 1888 been harvesting good crops off the farm—"a little more than 200 bushels of wheat, in 1884," says one of the old letters—and he had quite a sizeable herd of cattle. In 1886 he built the huge barn, which was almost a nine-days wonder in the district because of its size and structure. It was built into the side of a hill, was 52 feet long and 25 feet wide, with seven-foot-high plastered stone walls, and a nine-foot frame structure for the hay.

It was time for Grimur to look around for a nice young woman to share all this affluence with him. And he found her in the person of Ingibjorg Snæbjarnardóttir Hanson, who had come from Iceland in 1884. So in 1889 they were married and together they continued to build up the home and plan for the future. Six years later they built their fine new nine-room house and here their seven daughters and only son grew up. Grimur and Ingibjorg were determined that all the children should receive a good education, and by the time that Grimur

Financial transactions in the form of cheques cashed reached a new record total of \$100,635,459,000 in 1950, exceeding by 15% the previous peak figure of \$87,554,363,000 recorded in 1949.

★

An act of parliament formed the

passed away, Solveig and Ted were already on the road to successful careers. The other girls applied their energy and enterprise in helping Mother keep the farm going, until each in turn was hustled out into a wider sphere of activity by Ingibjorg, who constantly spurred them on to further educating themselves, so that all of them have made a success in one way or another.

Now over eighty years of age, Ingibjorg is still hale and vigorously active and loves visiting back and forth with her daughters and son. She makes her home in Glenview with her daughter Julia, and granddaughter, Sylvia.



As the visiting Thordarson families, one by one, took their leave, they visualized the changes and improvements they would make to preserve this old homestead. And it will stand for untold years to come as a sort of monument to the energy, intelligence and enterprise of these North Dakota pioneers. The old place stands quietly deserted once more, but the echo of by-gone footsteps lingers in the rooms, and a faint whisper of history is wafted across the lawn, through the grand old elms and poplars, to float down the sloping hill where the children used to romp, and run their sleighs in winter.

NOTE—We are grateful to Judge G. Grimson for loaning the old letters written to Iceland by his relatives. The next issue of the Icelandic Canadian will feature another interesting North Dakota family.)

Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1873, to preserve law and order in the unsettled West.

★

During 1950, 2,068,048 foreign vehicles entered Canada on traveller's vehicle permits.

Peace River Pioneer

(Continued from Page 13)

through with dinner when I noticed that the ponies bells had stopped ringing. Thinking it queer that they would stop feeding so soon, I went almost at once to look for them, but there was no sign of them. I looked and hunted all through the bush until dark and found no sign of them. They had disappeared as if the earth had swallowed them. The next morning when I was wondering what to do next, along came Sgt. Anderson, R.C.M.P. I had met him and, in fact, Pete Tomkins, the Dominion Land Agent, and I had supper at his place when we came out from Grande Prairie a month or so before. Tomkins spoke very highly of Sgt. Anderson and told me he was a countryman of mine, and that he always stopped to see him when he went through, so he said I had better come with him and meet him. The Sergeant was a big, fine fellow, married to a fine Scottish woman, and they had a nice family—one girl had Peace for a second name after Peace River. Well, I was lucky the Sergeant came along that morning. I told him my troubles about the ponies disappearing.

He said: "I'll tell you what you better do. There is an Indian village ahead on the road a piece. You go there and offer five dollars to the Indians to find your ponies and I think they will find them for you."

I did this, then went back to camp, and in about an hour or two, two Indians brought my ponies. I paid them the five dollars and asked no questions.

We were now on our way again towards Peace River Crossing. That afternoon we met a man with his wife and family pulling out of the country.

He was trailing a nice red cow behind the wagon. He also had a dozen nice brown Leghorn chickens and since he was getting close to Grouard where he would take the boat, he was ready to sell the cow and the chickens, so I bought them. The poor cow was untied from his wagon and tied behind mine to go right back again over the same trail. The cow was milking, so now we had milk on the trail. The hens also laid the odd egg in their crate, so we were well away. The cow was young and turned out to be nice and gentle and a good milker. She lived to a ripe old age and raised us many calves. The chickens also were very good and gave us lots of eggs when they got settled on the farm in Grande Prairie.

Now my wife began to wonder what kind of a place I was taking her to. She knew I had bought oxen from a young couple going out of the country and now we met another couple with their family taking the trail back to civilization. I told her that there was always people like that turning back. We reached Peace River Crossing without further mishap. As it had rained once more we camped there for two days, then we crossed the river on the ferry and proceeded west on the north side of the river towards Dunvegan. Now the country was open here and there for long stretches and travelling was much better, but the rain stayed with us. About every other day it would rain a little; when we reached Dunvegan it was a clear afternoon and the sun was shining. I said then, as I have often said since, that the scenery that meets the eye on a clear day going down the Dunvegan Hill on the north

side of the Peace River is hard to beat anywhere. We camped on the flats at the river for the night. Now we had the worst hill on the whole trip ahead of us. We must remember that the roads and the way they wound around up and down the hills at that time was altogether different from what they are now. To make matters worse it had rained some more in the night. However, in the morning, the sun was shining. We crossed on the ferry and started to climb the hill but soon found we would have to double up, so we put both teams on one wagon—the ponies on the lead—and took it all the way to the top. Then we went back and got the other one and my wife with the children walked all the way up slowly, barefooted in the mud, while we hauled the wagons up. By the time we were all to the top of the hill, it was noon. We now proceeded towards Spirit River and camped near there that night.

Next day, about noon, we came to Burnt River. There was no bridge and the water was not very deep at the ford, so we had no difficulty fording it, but here again we had a steep winding hill, though not as long as the Dunvegan Hill. The afternoon was half gone by the time we got both loads to the top. That night we camped in a nice little open space surrounded by thick bush. In the morning we could not find the oxen. We had heard their bells in the night and I knew they would be lying down not far away unless something serious had happened. We found them lying down chewing their cud quite contented. We now had ahead of us about ten or twelve miles of the worst road on the whole trip. This was through the so-called Saddle Mountain between Spirit River and Grande Prairie. The trails then did not go where the highway runs

now. There were no culverts, and where we could not cross without one, we had to make one. Any culverts that had been put in before were either rotted or washed out. It took all of one day to make six or seven miles and it was one of the hardest days we had on the whole trip. It took us the best part of two days to get through those hills and into more open and more level country where the trail was better. On the night of August 14, we camped near a little stream. We were now only about nine miles from the place I had filed on for a homestead.

That evening it felt cold and the next morning there was ice on the water, but since it was in a low place, I did not take that too seriously. The next day—August 15, 1911—we camped at noon at the southwest corner of our place. I walked almost a mile to Clairmont Lake to get water for tea and it was not good water at that. That afternoon we pulled over to the northeast corner of my half-section where there was a little lake and the first thing I did before I even put up our tent was to dig a hole into the moss alongside the lake. It soon filled up with clear water. I might say here that the reason I did not file on some of that nice level land north of Peace River was the lack of surface water for man or beast. On the other hand, Grande Prairie was dotted with little lakes which, in the early days, had water the year around.

Next we proceeded to put up our tent and make a permanent camp to live in for the next six or eight weeks. The first thing I had to do was put up some hay if I could get hold of a mower; then after that, build a cabin. I had, of course, no implements, not even a walking plow, and it was too late now to prepare land for next year's crop anyway. New sod should

not be broken later than the end of June or tenth or twelfth of July at the latest. Hay I must put up before I did anything else. We had been 38 days on the road since we left Winnipeg. Of that, stopovers accounted for about twelve days, and actually we were travelling 26 days, of which five were on train and boat which left 21 days' riding in the wagon. It was three months since I left Winnipeg on my first trip to look for a location in the Peace River.

The next day we spent getting properly settled in our tent camp. We put up the stove which we had brought along, cut some fire-wood and did many other things. By evening I felt I was ready to see about putting up hay, but that was not to be. That evening the mosquitoes were very bad. We had a smudge for the stock.

My wife thought it was a shame to have the ponies hobbled and I thought maybe they would stay around if I took the hobbles off. No sooner had I taken them off than they kicked up their heels and away they went as fast as they could go in a northeasterly direction. I followed afoot until I could not hear the bell anymore and by that time it was dark, so I turned back to camp. For three days I looked for those ponies on foot. Then I borrowed a pony from a settler and trapper who lived about five miles away and looked for them two more days on horseback, but to no avail. So I gave up the hunt for the time being at least for I had to start hay-making. The country around where the ponies went was all wild, so there was no one to enquire of—not even Indians.

There were quite a few settlers scattered throughout the country. A few had come in a year or two before, but most of them the previous winter of 1910, on sleighs, but none were settled

where my ponies went. I put up notices offering a reward of fifteen dollars to anyone that would find and bring my ponies alive and well to me.

We had now discovered that there was a family settled on the next section to us. It turned out to be Mr. and Mrs. Dave Sexsmith, after whom the town of Sexsmith is named. They had come in on sleighs the previous winter on the same road we did. He had brought a mower and rake, and since he had finished haying, he was good enough to loan me these implements. So I hooked up the oxen and went haying. There was a big hay meadow about five miles from our camp and settlers from miles away came here to hay. None of us needed a very great amount for none of us had more than a few head of stock, but then we had no other feed—no grain or green feed—and therefore had to have more hay per head of stock. I left the trustworthy oxen at the hay camp over night and walked back to our tent camp at night and back in the morning. One morning when I came back to the hay camp I found that one of the men haying there could not find his horses in the morning and was looking for them. About ten o'clock that morning he came back with my two lost ponies instead of his own which he had not yet found. He had found mine several miles northeast of there and about twenty miles from our home camp. I paid the fifteen dollars reward I had offered and now had my ponies back once more.

It was into the first week of September when I finished haying and I immediately started to build a shack 16 by 20 out of poplar logs cut on the place. We chose a high ridge about one-quarter of a mile southwest of where we were camped. From here we had a grand view of the country and we later christened it Grande View

farm. I soon had the walls of the shack up and while a neighbor helped me put the ridge pole up, I kept my eye on the ponies which were standing there right by the shack, hooked on to the wagon on which they had pulled the pole out of the bush. Again I had to learn my lesson the hard way about those Indian ponies. We were just putting the ridge pole in place when, for some reason of their own, away went the ponies, wagon and all. This time they followed our hay trail which went pretty well in the same direction as they had gone before. Once again I followed on foot. About three miles away I came upon the hind wheels of the wagon and a bolster, the kingbolt having come out. A few miles further on I found the ponies tangled up in a bluff with the front wheels of the wagon. Not much damage had been done. I might say right here that they got away once more but not until the following summer. That time I was busy fencing and, not in any particular need of them, so I did not go to look for them for a few days. Then one day at noon I left on a borrowed pony to look for them. There were some new settlers on the way and some of them had seen the ponies on their way to the same wild country where they had gone before. Just before dark I heard their bell and it had started to rain. I hurried as much as I could, winding my way through the brush towards the sound of the bell. Then all at once, to my dismay, the bell stopped ringing. It was now pitch dark and raining heavily. There was nothing I could do but camp there until morning. Luckily I had matches and some lunch with me, so I built a roaring fire to dry myself and to keep warm. By midnight the rain stopped and at daybreak the bell started ringing again and I soon had the ponies going on the way home.

I saw to it that they never got away on me again. It might be mentioned here that naturally it would be no small worry for my wife to be alone at home all night with three small children and not knowing what had happened to me.

Coming back to the building of the shack, a small lumber mill had been brought in on sleighs the winter before and was now turning out rough lumber and spruce shingles. It was located near the Wapiti River about 20 miles from my place. I got a neighbor, who was a bachelor, J. Weston by name, to take my oxen and go for a load of this lumber—enough boards for the roof and floor of the 16 x 20 cabin and also enough for an addition for a kitchen 12 x 16 and rough shingles, to cover the whole thing. This Weston did well and truly like the good neighbor and man he was—but more of him later. I now soon had a roof on the cabin, the rough board floor in and walls chinked up.

I now needed to plaster the walls inside and out with some sort of plaster. I had heard that Henry Roberts and his sons had burned a kiln of lime. The Roberts lived on the south side of Bear Lake and about 15 miles from my place across country, so I hooked up the ponies and went to get some lime. There were several settlers on the south side of Bear Lake who had come in two or three years before and now had some crop in. One of these settlers was cutting a small field of oats as I came along. As I had no feed for the ponies, except a bit of hay, I asked him what he wanted for a couple of bundles of oats and he said 25 cents a bundle. When I arrived at the Roberts' place they had already had dinner, but that made no difference to them. I had intended to get my little lime at once before the men went to work

after dinner, and then drive down the road a piece where I had spotted a good place to feed and water the ponies and have my lunch which I had with me. But the Roberts boys insisted on unhooking the ponies, putting them in and feeding them. They took me into the house for dinner where Mrs. Henry Roberts good-naturedly and kindly served me with a splendid meal. A meal in the Peace River country at that time was worth something, with flour selling at \$12.00 a hundred and sugar at \$25.00 a hundred if bought at the then local stores. But such was the hospitality and the true pioneer spirit of the Roberts' family.

Now that I had the lime, I soon had the cabin plastered and on October 18 we moved out of the tent into the cabin. And were we glad! The next job was to put up a log barn which we soon had up with pole and dirt roof. A bachelor neighbor helped me a few days with the heavy logs. I already had a little chicken coup and our brown Leghorns, which I bought on the road, were laying well, and the cow gave us plenty of milk. I might point out here that oats could be purchased from earlier settlers at around \$1.00 a bushel. There was not much wheat around but we managed to get a little for our dozen chickens. I now intended to finish the 12X16 kitchen, but winter started early. The first week in November was bitterly cold with a cold northeast wind blowing, so I gave up the kitchen until next spring for I had to cut a lot of firewood before the snow got too deep and get it all buck-sawed for there were no power woodsaws around there then. I had to buck-saw enough wood to last while I made the (250 miles one way) trip to Edson in January for supplies and machinery. There was no chance of me running out of a job for there was

always the woodpile and the buck-saw waiting for me.

Just before Christmas I made a trip to the Hudson Bay Store at Lake Saskatoon, about 18 miles away. Our needs were not great and we could not afford to buy much at the prevailing prices, but one thing I wanted was a few candles for Christmas. I bought the candles and laid them on the counter while I lingered a little in the store looking around, then went out and forgot them, never realizing I did not have them until I got home, and naturally we were all disappointed. A neighbor went a few days later to the store and I sent a note with him about the candles, but they said someone must have picked them up for they saw nothing of them.

Soon after Christmas I started to get ready to make the trip to Edson. We had to take enough feed with us to feed the animals for the round trip, and to get enough hay on the sleigh, it must be baled. Someone had made a homemade baler and a neighbor and I baled enough for the two of us. I was taking the two teams, the oxen and the ponies and, though oats were high. I had some oat chop for the oxen and a little oats for the ponies. The distance from where we were to Edson was around 250 miles or about 500 miles the round trip, and it took us 22½ days to make the trip, including 2½ days' stopover in Edson.

We started the first week in January. The weather was very cold most of the way in. I had most of the load on the oxen and drove them and let the ponies follow. The neighbor drove his team behind them again. Now that winter of 1912, the Edson Trail was new, having been cut through the previous winter and summer. It was, therefore, a very difficult road to travel in places, mostly on account of the hills.

One of these hills was called a break-neck hill. An ox or a horse (I would rather think a horse) was supposed to have broken his neck on that hill. On many of these hills we had to put a rough lock on the sleighs going down the hill and then double up going up again. We did not have to do so much of this going out as the loads were lighter, but coming back with the heavier loads, we had to do plenty of it. It was, therefore, not a good practice to have a driverless team, but as the ponies only had a light load going out, we got on fairly well. The first winter over the Edson trail there were only a few road houses at each end of the trail but the whole centre of it (about 200 miles) had no road houses at all.

About every other day we would store some feed in the bush a little way from the road, hiding it behind a bluff and hoping it would snow to cover our tracks. We would make some mark so that we would be sure to find it on our way back, but the rabbits always had some of the hay eaten. Sometimes by the time we got back some two-legged rabbit had helped himself. This losing of feed was a pretty serious matter since it was the only feed we had to depend on for our teams. For at least 150 to 175 miles there was no feed to be had, and in one case I knew of a settler on the trail who got so hard pressed for feed that he had to open a sack of oatmeal and feed it to his oxen.

Before we left home my good wife would fill up a big grub box with all good things at her command. We always tried to have as much fat in the food as possible because it would not freeze so badly. Head cheese with plenty of fat in it, doughnuts, biscuits, boiled and sliced potatoes, and so forth. It was quite a feat to lift that grub box

up when we started but usually it got pretty light by the time we got to Edson where we replenished some things that were running short, for the return trip. There we would get a good supply of bacon—the best in the line of meat on a winter trail.

Most men who usually wore a moustache cut it off as soon as they could get hold of scissors to do it because of icicles. It took longer to thaw them out than the grub. The writer wore a moustache at that time, and the first caboose he met in which there was a woman and her husband moving into Grande Prairie, he asked her for, and got, a pair of scissors to cut off his moustache.

(To be continued)

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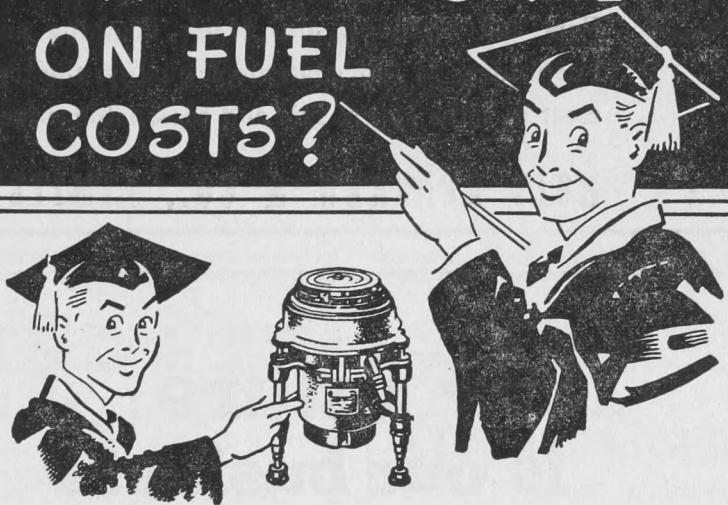
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The City of Winnipeg Civic Election will be held this fall on Oct. 24. I am again standing for re-election to the City Council — as alderman for Ward 2.

I appreciate the support the Icelandic people have given me in the past and I have earnestly tried to legislate for the benefit of all Winnipeg. As chairman of our Public Utility Committee for the past five years, it has been my pleasure to guide a rapid extension in our electric and water utility services.

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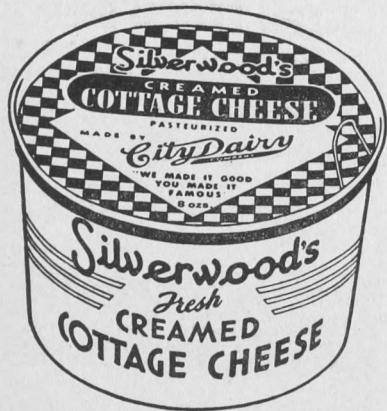
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